

Grades for Ten Largest Cities in California

Strong tobacco control laws in the largest cities in California could make a big difference in protecting more than a quarter of California’s residents from secondhand smoke and other dangers of tobacco.

Unfortunately for years, California’s top ten most populous cities have done little to improve their grades and none have earned an overall grade of “A.” Elected officials in California’s most populated areas must do more to ensure their residents are protected from the harmful effects of tobacco.

California’s Report Card

Ten Largest Cities in California by Population		Overall Tobacco Control Grade
Los Angeles	Pop. 4,054,400	C
San Diego	Pop. 1,419,845	D
San Jose	Pop. 1,051,316	B
San Francisco	Pop. 883,963	B
Fresno	Pop. 538,330	F
Sacramento	Pop. 501,344	C
Long Beach	Pop. 478,561	C
Oakland	Pop. 428,827	B
Bakersfield	Pop. 386,839	F
Anaheim	Pop. 357,084	F

Population numbers from State of California, Department of Finance, E-1 Population Estimates for Cities and Counties. Sacramento, CA, May 1, 2018.

In 2017, San Francisco was the first major city in the United States to pass a policy restricting the sale of flavored tobacco, including menthol.

The tobacco industry immediately pushed the policy to a referendum to be voted on by the people in June 2018. The people of San Francisco took a firm stance and voted 68% in favor of upholding the policy.

This wouldn’t have been possible without the efforts of community and public health advocates.

Eliminating the sale of candy-flavored tobacco products lifts every neighborhood up: From Chinatown to The Bayview; from The Castro to The Mission. When the tobacco companies forced the issue to a public vote, 68% of San Francisco voters dug in to protect the youngest and most vulnerable, sending a mighty rebuke to the makers of Newport Menthol, Banana Smash Swisher Sweets, Mango Juul and the rest of the sorry lot.”

- BOB GORDON, Co-Chair San Francisco Tobacco-Free Coalition

