



MEMORANDUM

March 6 , 2006

TO: TO INTERESTED PARTIES

FROM: PAUL GOODWIN
Goodwin Simon Strategic Research

RE: Summary of Survey Research Findings on Attitudes About Smoke-Free Apartments

METHODOLOGY

On behalf of the Center for Tobacco Policy and Organizing, Goodwin Simon Strategic Research conducted two telephone surveys in the past year with apartment renters and owners/managers. We conducted an initial survey of 600 apartment renters in May, 2004, followed by a survey of 300 apartment owners and managers in June, 2005. The margin of error for the first study is plus or minus four percent, and for the second survey the margin of error is plus or minus 5.6 percent, both at a 95 percent confidence level.

KEY FINDINGS

The studies show very clearly that Californians are ready for local ordinances encouraging apartment owners and managers to set aside smoke-free apartment units.

In fact, the polling found that:

- **Fully 69 percent of apartment renters and 57 percent of apartment owners/managers would favor a law requiring all apartment buildings in their city to offer non-smoking sections.**
- **Support for a smoke-free apartment law rises to 67 percent among apartment owners/managers when they learn that this law would protect people from second-hand smoke and would reduce their fire insurance premiums.**

- **Eleven percent of California owners/managers report that they already have smoke-free apartment units in their buildings.**
- **Most apartment owners/managers are willing to put aside a sizable proportion of smoke-free apartment units. In fact, the median proportion of units they were willing to set aside as non-smoking is 50 percent. Only 10 percent of all apartment owners/managers were unwilling to set aside any units as non-smoking.**

We also learned that:

- More than 85 percent of apartment renters and owners/managers say that second-hand smoke is harmful.
- Nearly 60 percent of renters and 69 percent of owners/managers say that second-hand smoke can drift from one apartment to another, and more than 70 percent say that it can drift from outside an apartment building into an apartment.
- Forty-four percent of apartment owners and managers say they have had to deal with complaints from tenants about second-hand smoke, and these owners/managers tend to be extremely supportive of efforts to encourage smoke-free units.
- Sixty-three percent of owners/managers say they usually or always enforce existing laws prohibiting smoking in indoor common areas, and 67 percent favor a law banning smoking in outdoor common areas like courtyards and swimming pools.
- Sixty-six percent of apartment owner and managers say they would consider setting aside smoke-free units if their tenants requested it, and 67 percent would consider it if they knew it would reduce fire insurance premiums.
- We also see that 66 percent of apartment owner/managers say that the following enforcement process would be “workable”: notification about the smoke-free policy, three warnings for violations, and then eviction for repeat violations.

In short, we find that a sizable majority of renters and apartment owners/managers favor a law requiring smoke-free apartments. Support for this law appears rooted in these factors:

- Near universal understanding of the danger of second-hand smoke.
- Awareness of demand among tenants for smoke-free housing.
- Acceptance of existing limits on smoking in indoor common areas in apartments.
- A desire to reduce fire insurance and cleaning costs for apartment owners.
- A desire to help protect children and those with chronic illnesses from the harmful impact of second-hand smoke.