



MEMORANDUM

April 14, 2007

TO: THE CENTER FOR TOBACCO POLICY AND ORGANIZING

FROM: PAUL GOODWIN
Goodwin Simon Victoria Research

RE: Findings from a Survey of Voters in Calabasas

INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

The Center for Tobacco Policy and Organizing asked Goodwin Simon Victoria Research to conduct a telephone survey of voters living in Calabasas, California. The purpose of the study was to evaluate voter reaction to the city's pioneering law to prohibit smoking in most outdoor areas. The survey was timed to mark the one-year anniversary of passage of the law.

We completed 300 interviews with registered voters in Calabasas who have participated in at least one election. The margin of error for this study is about plus or minus 5.5% at a 95% confidence level. That is, if this survey were to be repeated exactly as it was originally conducted, then 95 out of 100 times the responses from the sample (expressed as proportions) would be within 5.5% of the actual population proportions.

The interviewing was conducted between March 29 and April 1, 2007. This report presents results broken out by factors such as age, party, or gender only if the differences are both statistically significant using standard significance testing, and are of relevance.

Throughout the report, we refer to those living in "*multi-family homes*." This includes residents living in apartment buildings, condos, town homes, and duplexes. There are simply too few Calabasas voters living in apartments alone (4%) to analyze their views separately, given this sample size.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

At the request of the Center for Tobacco Policy and Organizing, Goodwin Simon Victoria Research conducted a telephone survey of 300 voters living in Calabasas. The purpose of the survey was to assess voter reaction to the city's law banning smoking in most outdoor public areas. The survey was timed to coincide with the one-year anniversary of the passage of the law. The margin of error for this study is plus or minus 5.5% at a 95% confidence level.

Below we present a summary of key findings from the study.

Voters Strongly Support New Law Banning Smoking in Outdoor Public Areas

On every question we asked about the new law, voter reaction was enthusiastic, and that enthusiasm appears to cross over the usual political or partisan divides.

Voters like the law, say it is working well, say it is appropriate as a way to protect people from second-hand smoke, say it has improved the quality of life in Calabasas, and do not feel it will discourage visits to the city.

Moreover, even among smokers, there is a sense that the law is working and is appropriate.

Specifically:

- Fully 80% approve of the new law, including 70% who “*strongly*” approve of it. Only 17% oppose this law. At least 74% approve of the law across gender lines, political parties and ideologies, and age groups. This kind of consensus in support for a public policy is extremely unusual. Even among current smokers (about 13% of Calabasas voters), 58% favor the law with 42% opposed.
- Almost everyone in the city is familiar with the law: 94% said they had heard of it.
- Of those familiar with the law, 72% say it is working well with just 8% who say it is not working well. **Even among smokers, 63% say the law is working well.** In fact, even among critics of the law – those who disapprove of the law – 38% say it is working well and just 26% say it is not working well.
- Nearly three in four (74%) say the law is “*an appropriate way to protect people from second-hand smoke,*” with just 22% who say this law “*goes too far in*

restricting the rights of smokers.” This includes 53% of smokers who say the law is appropriate.

- One underlying foundation for the strong support this law enjoys is the acute concern expressed by voters about second-hand smoke. Seventy-seven percent say second-hand smoke is “very” harmful, and another 15% say it is “somewhat” harmful. Only 4% say it is not harmful. Even smokers recognize the risk, with 82% who say second-hand smoke is harmful.
- By an 11 to 1 ratio, voters say the new law has improved rather than hurt the quality of life in Calabasas. Fifty-nine percent say it has improved the quality of life, with just 5% who say it has hurt the quality of life. Even among smokers, the ratio is more than two to one in favor of this law improving the quality of life.
- By a four to one ratio, voters believe the law will not discourage many people from visiting the city to shop or for entertainment: 72% say it will not discourage visitors compared to just 18% who say it will.

When we break the law down into individual provisions, we find 70% or greater support level for nearly each one:

- 75% approve of a ban on smoking outdoors in Calabasas except on private property
- 79% approve of a ban on smoking in outdoor common areas in apartments (including 69% of those who currently live in multi-family housing units such as condos, town homes, and apartments)
- 73% approve of a ban on smoking on sidewalks
- 74% approve of a ban on smoking in outdoor areas of bars and restaurants
- 79% approve of allowing second-hand smoke to be declared a public nuisance.

The only provision with slightly lower support levels was the ban on smoking in parking lots. Sixty-one percent approved this provision, with 36% opposed.

Smoking Ban Leads to Strong Approval Ratings for Calabasas City Council

The Council receives a 67% positive job rating (“*excellent*” or “*good*”) and only 20% say it is doing a “*fair*” or “*poor*” job. These are exceptionally high job ratings for any public agency. Among those who favor the no-smoking law, 75% give the Council a positive rating, compared to just 37% of those who disapprove of the ordinance. Clearly the Council’s vote to approve the very popular law is a major reason for its high approval rating. It’s been a big political plus for the City Council.

Voters Do Not See Strong Enforcement of the Law

While the no-smoking law is embraced by most voters, ratings for how well the city is enforcing the law are far more mixed: 46% approve of how the city is enforcing the law, 12% disapprove, and the balance (42%) are not sure.

In fact, only 13% say they have heard of someone actually being warned for smoking in public.

Nonetheless, 47% say they have seen the law being violated, including 62% of those living in multi-family dwellings, and 32% say they personally have experienced second-hand smoke in a public place in Calabasas.

This suggests that violations of the law are fairly common, while few have experienced any actual enforcement of the law.

There is Widespread Support for Additional Smoking Restrictions in Apartment Buildings in Calabasas

We tested two additional smoking restrictions for apartment buildings in Calabasas and found wide support for each one.

First, by 67% to 25%, voters would favor a law to require smoke-free sections in each apartment building in Calabasas. Solid support for this law is seen among all voter groups, including 58% of smokers and 63% of those who live in multi-family housing.

Second, by a near-identical margin of 68% to 26%, voter favor a law to require apartment complexes in Calabasas with multiple apartment buildings to make some of those buildings “*entirely smoke-free.*” Among those living in multi-family homes, 58% favor this law with 35% opposed. Even among smokers, 47% favor the idea with 50% opposed.

Some Voters Sympathetic Towards Smokers Living in Buildings that Go Smoke-Free

Some voters do not want to see current smokers forced out of their apartments if their building goes smoke-free. Thirty-eight percent said they should be allowed to keep smoking in their apartment for as long as they want. Another 38% said they should be allowed to keep smoking until their lease is up. Only 6% said they should be given a time limit of 1 year until they have to stop smoking in their apartment, and 8% said they should stop smoking immediately.

Voters Want Strong Enforcement if Someone Moves Into a Smoke-Free Apartment and Violates Law

But if someone moves into a building that is smoke-free and "*repeatedly violates the law by smoking in his apartment,*" voters are far less forgiving. More than four in ten (42%) want that person evicted, while 34% said he should be fined. Even among smokers, only 18% say there should be no penalty for repeat violators

Smoking Behavior

Eight percent say there is a tobacco smoker in their household, including 15% of those living in a multi-family home. Nine percent say they have smoked tobacco in the past week, including 17% of those in multi-family housing and 20% who say they have lived in an apartment in Calabasas at some point. In total, 13% say either that they smoke now or that their household has a smoker. Only 7% say they allow smoking in their home. Only 9% say they have allowed smoking in their home in the past week. Twenty-six percent of non-smokers (or 24% overall) say they used to smoke in the past.

Conclusions and Recommendations

After a year of experience, Calabasas residents give the city's pioneering anti-smoking law a strong vote of confidence. It's rare to find a law - especially one initially considered to be controversial - enjoying such broad as well as deep support. Appreciation for this law crosses gender, age, and political divides.

The one concern that the survey reveals has to do with enforcement. Sizable proportions of resident say they have seen violations of the law or have themselves been exposed to second-hand smoke in Calabasas in violation of the law. And yet only 13% have seen anyone actually fined or warned for smoking in public places.

This lack of visible enforcement holds the potential to undermine public respect for the law, and could lead to erosion of its support.

The survey also shows local voters more than willing to support further restrictions on smoking in the city's apartment buildings. Either smoke-free sections or entire smoke-free buildings seem to be the logical next step for Calabasas, and voters are willing to walk with the city down that path.