

The California Legislature reconvened January 7 for the second year of the 2007-2008 legislative session. With the start of this year's session, Legislators have another opportunity to introduce bills, as well as take action on bills that were introduced but not passed in 2007. There are a couple of tobacco-related bills from 2007, including SB 4 by Senator Oropeza (D-Long Beach), which would prohibit smoking in state parks and beaches. These two-year bills have accelerated deadlines and would need to pass their house of origin by January 31. Below is a brief outline of the key legislative dates and deadlines for 2008.

- January 7 – Legislature reconvenes
- January 8 – Governor's State of the State Address
- January 10 – Governor releases 2008-2009 Budget
- January 31 – Deadline for two-year bills to pass house of origin
- February 22 – Last day to introduce bills
- Mid May – Governor releases May Revise to 2008-2009 Budget
- May 30 – Deadline for bills to pass house of origin
- June 15 – Deadline for the Legislature to pass 2008-2009 Budget
- June 30 – Deadline for the Governor to sign 2008-2009 Budget
- August 31 – Last day that bills can be passed by the Legislature
- September 30 – Last day for Governor to sign or veto legislation

In addition, the Legislature is working on a comprehensive health care reform plan that will have an impact on the tobacco control program. In December, the Assembly passed health care reform legislation (ABX1-1) that would require all Californians to obtain medical coverage and provide subsidies to those who cannot afford coverage. Part of the financing for the health care reform plan is a \$1.75/pack tobacco tax increase. However, before this plan goes into effect, several additional steps are necessary. First, the Senate still has to pass this health care legislation. The Senate leader is waiting for an analysis of how this plan would impact the states' budget before deciding to hold a vote in the Senate. If the Senate does pass the health care reform bill, the tobacco tax increase still must be approved by the voters of California on the November 2008 ballot. As written, the health care initiative does not include a specific appropriation from the new tobacco tax revenues for tobacco control, although it would "backfill" Proposition 99 programs for any revenue losses due to the new \$1.75 tobacco tax. In addition, because of the way Proposition 99 was written, the new tobacco tax revenues generated from the sale of non-cigarette tobacco products (cigars, pipe tobacco, spit tobacco, etc.) will revert to Proposition 99 programs.

As a reminder, most bills that were signed into law in 2007, including SB 7 that prohibits smoking in cars with minors, went into effect on January 1. As new bills are introduced or legislative activity occurs, the Center will continue to distribute bill summaries and legislative updates regularly.

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