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## SELF-SERVICE TOBACCO DISPLAY BAN

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### Questions And Answers

#### What is a self-service display ban?

A self-service tobacco display ban implies that the tobacco product is accessible to the public through, for example, a rack, shelf, or counter-top display. A ban on self-service displays (SSDs) makes the tobacco product inaccessible to the public except through the assistance of a clerk. For example, the tobacco can be locked up or placed behind the counter.

#### Are there laws that ban self-service displays?

As of January 1, 2002, California State law prohibits the self-service display of cigarettes. This law does not apply to other tobacco products, such as cigars or smokeless tobacco. However, the law does allow for stricter local ordinances (e.g., prohibiting the self-service displays for smokeless, cigars, etc.). Over 100 local governments currently have ordinances restricting self-service tobacco displays.

#### What are the benefits of self-service display bans?

- Make tobacco products inaccessible to the public except through the assistance of a clerk.
- Reduce youth access to tobacco by reducing tobacco theft.
- Increase the level of interaction required before a clerk can sell tobacco to a minor by requiring the minor to specifically ask for tobacco and the clerk to consciously sell it.
- Lessen the temptation for anyone to purchase tobacco products on impulse.

#### What type of arguments might I hear against a local ordinance to ban SSDs?

- *Shoplifting of tobacco by minors is not a problem.*  
Studies show that shoplifting is a common behavior among teens, many teens either take their cigarettes from friends, others, or steal them from stores.
- *Compliance with a SSD ban will be costly for businesses.*  
Surveys from communities that passed SSD ordinances found that there were little or no architectural/structural expenses, and that retailers received locked cabinets or shelves from the tobacco distributors/companies. In fact, Philip Morris has required members of its “Retail Leaders” program to remove cigarette SSDs.
- *You don’t need a SSD ban for cigars and smokeless tobacco because youth do not use those products.*  
Recent data from the 1999 California Tobacco Survey (CTS) indicate that youth do use cigars and smokeless tobacco products, and that smokeless use is relatively high in rural areas of the state.