

How to pass a local resolution supporting Smoke Free Movies!



Grassroots pressure on the motion picture studios and their corporate parents will convince them that change is inevitable and in their best interest. And cooperation from local movie theaters and video outlets will be critical to the success of the four-point program to keep smoking out of kids' movies and kids out of smoking movies. Big reasons for local action!

Publicize the issue, educate youth and parents, engage local organizations and build political consensus by introducing a City or County resolution supporting Smoke Free Movies.

STEP 1: Identify a City Council member (or County Supervisor) you think is most likely to support Smoke Free Movies.

STEP 2: Call that person, introduce yourself and briefly describe the resolution you want passed. Mention that you would like this Council person to introduce the resolution and support it throughout the process. Then request a face-to-face discussion.

STEP 3: Bring two or three well-informed, personable people to the meeting. Bring a copy of the resolution you would like the Council person to support. You may also want to bring a small packet of information about the issue. An information packet might include some of the following – most available now at the University of California–San Francisco web site smokefreemovies.ucsf.edu:

- Fact sheets on the history of smoking in movies
- Published studies and/or tobacco industry documents on the impact of smoking in movies
- Letters of endorsement from prominent groups or individuals in your community
- Letters from Council members in other cities or endorsements from national organizations

STEP 4: If your targeted Council person agrees to introduce and shepherd the resolution through the process, obtain their commitment to keep you informed. Offer to meet with other council members.

STEP 5: If you can't find a supportive City Council person at first, you may have to use more aggressive methods. Gather petition signatures from city residents, or get other civic organizations to endorse the resolutions, and present these to Council members as proof of widespread community support. You can also demonstrate or rally support for a resolution by using the local media, writing letters to your local paper or calling local talk radio shows.

STEP 6: Once you know the resolution is going to be introduced, use that fact to line up more support. Ask other local residents to come speak in support of your resolution and fill the room when it's debated. Let the introducing Council person know that you're continuing to educate and organize.

STEP 7: Alert the local media when your resolution is passed. Make sure that copies of the ratified resolution are sent to your state and federal elected officials. Legislators pay great attention to what local lawmakers are doing.

Why should local councils get involved?

This is a national problem that reaches right into our neighborhoods and our homes.

Media power is concentrated in a handful of corporations. They need to hear what we think as parents, citizens and consumers.

The well being of our young people is a community responsibility. There is no other intervention that will save more lives in the next generation than to get smoking out of kid-rated movies – simply and cost-free.

See a Model Resolution on line at smokefreemovies.ucsf.edu

Smoke Free Movies is a project of at the University of California, San Francisco, Center for Tobacco Control Research and Education.

Model Resolution for Municipalities to Support Smokefree Movies

Whereas tobacco use is the leading cause of preventable death and disability in the United States;

Whereas youth ages 12-20 are one-sixth of the population but buy more than one-quarter of all movie tickets;

Whereas most U.S. movies with smoking are now rated PG-13 and a majority of tobacco impressions delivered to theater audiences since 2000 came from youth-rated movies;

Whereas exposure to smoking in movies recruits half of all new adolescent smokers in the United States;

Whereas each year an estimated 390,000 teens start smoking because of their exposure to smoking in movies, 120,000 of whom will die prematurely as a result;

Whereas the tobacco industry has a long, documented history of promoting the use of tobacco and particular brands on screen, while concealing and denying the practice;

Whereas the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has repeatedly listed smoking in movies as a primary reason that the decline in teen smoking has stalled;

Whereas smoking in television ads for movies, significantly greater in ads for movies that display a particular tobacco brand, reach the vast majority of children and teens;

Whereas the World Health Organization, American Medical Association, American Heart Association, American Lung Association, American Legacy Foundation, American Academy of Pediatrics, American Academy of Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology, Society for Adolescent Medicine and others – including the Los Angeles Department of Health Services, the New York State Department of Health – endorse the elimination of smoking imagery from future movies rated G, PG and PG-13;

Whereas the majority of state Attorneys General wrote the Motion Picture Association of America in 2007, requesting action in the following terms:

[E]ach time a member of the industry releases another movie that depicts smoking, it does so with the full knowledge of the harm it will bring to children who watch it...[E]liminate the depiction of tobacco smoking from films accessible to children and youth. There is simply no justification for further delay.

Whereas the University of California-San Francisco has mounted an educational and advocacy campaign, Smoke Free Movies, designed to reduce the value of American movies as promotional devices for the tobacco industry through four simple, voluntary actions by the motion picture industry:

Rate New Smoking Movies R

Any film that shows or implies tobacco should be rated R. The only exceptions should be when the presentation of tobacco clearly and unambiguously reflects the dangers and consequences of tobacco use or is necessary to represent smoking of a real historical figure;

Certify No Pay-Offs

The producers should post a certificate in the credits at the end of the movie declaring that nobody on the production received anything of value (cash money, free cigarettes or other gifts, free publicity, interest-free loans or anything else) from anyone in exchange for using or displaying tobacco;

Require Strong Anti-Smoking Ads

Studios and theaters should require a genuinely strong anti-smoking ad (not one produced by a tobacco company) to run before any film with any tobacco presence, regardless of its MPAA rating;

Stop Identifying Tobacco Brands

There should be no tobacco brand identification nor the presence of tobacco brand imagery (such as billboards) in the background of any movie scene;

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the [City Council] of _____ endorses the four objectives of the Smoke Free Movies campaign.

Be it further resolved that this resolution shall be transmitted to the Motion Picture Association of America; to the major motion picture studios and to their parent corporations (Warner Bros., owned by Time Warner; Disney, Touchstone and Miramax, owned by The Disney Company; 20th Century Fox, owned by The News Corporation; Columbia and MGM, owned by Sony Corporation of America; Universal, owned by General Electric; Paramount, owned by Viacom); the state Attorney General; our U.S. Senators and Congressional Representatives; and the University of California-San Francisco Smoke Free Movies project.

Be it further resolved that the City Manager [or appropriate executive] write theaters in the [City of / County of _____] requesting that they refrain from exhibiting youth-rated (G/PG/PG-13) films that include smoking or other tobacco promotion or, if they do, that they admit patrons under the same terms as if the film were rated R.

DATED and effective this _____ day of [month, year] at [location].

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

County Counsel



**SMOKE
FREE
MOVIES**

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