

Cyndie Martel

From: Pam Ling <ling.pam@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 12, 2025 11:11 PM
To: Cyndie Martel
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public comment on Ordinance No 735

Dear Town Councilmembers,

I am Professor of Medicine at the University of California San Francisco and Director of the Center for Tobacco Control Research and Education. I have over 20 years of experience conducting research on tobacco industry marketing and its impact on young people and tobacco related diseases. I am writing in my own capacity and not representing the views of UCSF.

Ordinance No. 735 of the Town of Ross amending Chapter 6.18 Smoking Regulations, Sections 6.18.020, 6.18.030, 6.18.065 and 6.18.070 of the Ross Municipal Code (RMC) to ban the sale of all tobacco products in the Town of Ross is an important step in support of California's efforts to end the tobacco epidemic by ending the sale of commercial tobacco products.

Ending the sale of commercial tobacco products in the town of Ross would have important public health benefits.

It would help to protect youth from adopting new tobacco and nicotine products that continue to proliferate. In California e-cigarettes are by far the most common tobacco product used by youth, and youth who start vaping have more than three times greater odds of starting to smoke cigarettes. It would safeguard youth against nicotine pouch products, which are proliferating, easy to conceal and contain addictive nicotine. Both e-cigarette and nicotine pouches are increasing in size and strength, increasing potential to start and perpetuate nicotine addiction.

Ending the sale of tobacco products would also take a definitive stance against the tobacco industry. The tobacco companies are trying to remake themselves as nicotine pharmaceutical companies and in doing so misuse the term "tobacco harm reduction" as a means to promote e-cigarettes, new heated tobacco products, and normalize nicotine use. While the tobacco industry says these products are used for smoking cessation or as safer alternatives to smoking, none of them have been approved by the FDA for smoking cessation. While e-cigarettes decrease exposure to some toxicants, e-cigarettes have their own risks, some of which are similar to cigarettes in terms of cardiovascular and pulmonary disease. The newest tobacco products and nicotine pouches simply do not have sufficient data to support their use, especially by youth who are paying to be guinea pigs for new tobacco and nicotine products.

Ending the sale of commercial tobacco products is a bold policy action that is also simple to enforce. It takes a definitive stand against tobacco industry influence, and will decrease youth uptake of new products and nicotine addiction.

Adopting these amendments would highlight Ross as a leader in ending the tobacco epidemic.

Thank you for your consideration.

Pamela Ling, MD MPH

Professor of Medicine