

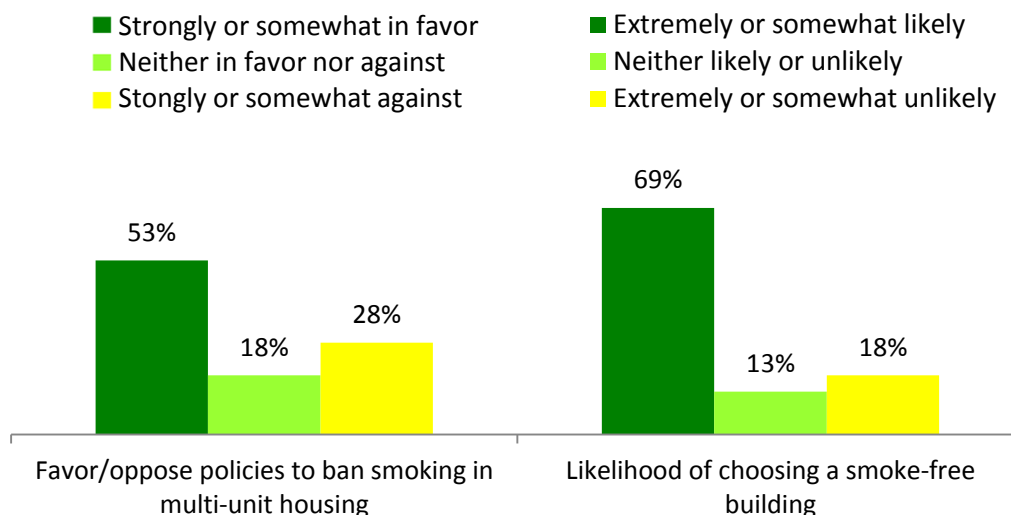
# Attitudes of Vermonters Regarding Secondhand Smoke and Point of Sale Policy

The purpose of this brief is to share data about the public's attitudes concerning several areas of tobacco control policy. Vermont has made considerable progress reducing smoking rates and exposure to secondhand smoke among youth and adults. National tobacco control guidance suggests that additional policy measures may be needed to counter the nearly \$19 million that the tobacco industry spends each year to market tobacco products in Vermont (approximately \$18,000 per tobacco retailer)<sup>1</sup>. The following data indicate that the policies described below are favored by Vermonters and could be among a range of options for state or local level interventions.

## Secondhand Smoke: Multi-Unit Housing

Secondhand smoke is a major cause of disease among healthy non-smokers, with nearly 50,000 deaths each year in the U.S. attributable to secondhand smoke<sup>2</sup>. Although Vermont has long prohibited smoking in indoor public places<sup>3</sup>, secondhand smoke exposure remains a risk in multi-unit housing (48% of non-smokers living in multi-unit housing reported exposure to secondhand smoke in 2012<sup>4</sup>). In 2012, a majority of Vermonters reported favoring policies that ban smoking in multi-unit housing<sup>4</sup>, while more than two-thirds reported being likely to choose a smoke-free building over a smoking-permitted building<sup>5</sup>.

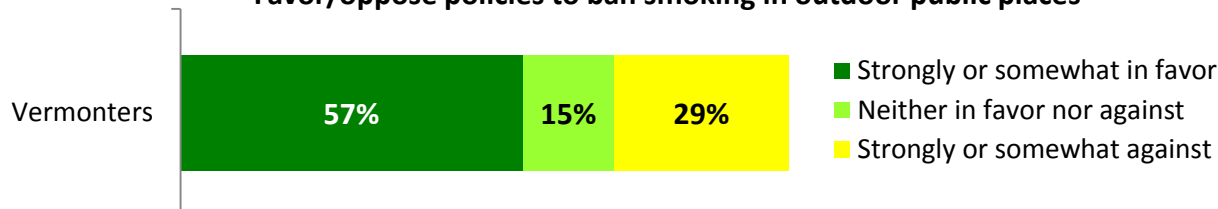
### Public preferences on smoke-free multi-unit housing



## Secondhand Smoke: Outdoor Spaces

In addition to laws prohibiting smoking in indoor public places in Vermont, numerous villages, towns and cities have enacted ordinances and policies to create smoke-free outdoor areas. More than half of Vermonters favor banning smoking in outdoor public spaces<sup>4</sup>.

### Favor/oppose policies to ban smoking in outdoor public places



## Point of Sale

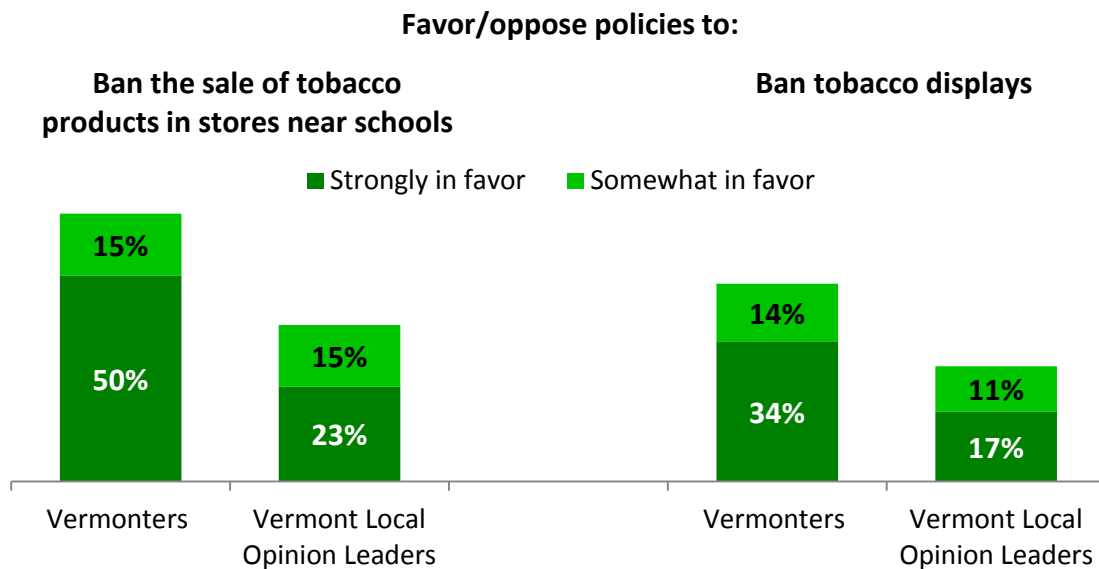
As a result of restrictions on tobacco advertising, the vast majority of the tobacco industry's marketing efforts are focused on the "point of sale" – retail stores where tobacco is sold<sup>6</sup>. Research confirms that point of sale marketing is a leading cause of youth smoking<sup>7</sup>.

### Location of Tobacco Retailers

Vermont does not currently limit the number or location of tobacco retailers. Two-thirds of Vermonters report being in favor of policies to ban the sale of tobacco products in retailers located near schools<sup>4</sup>. In contrast, 38% of local opinion leaders, including Vermont mayors, town managers, select board chairs and planning commission directors, favored such a policy<sup>8</sup>.

### Restrictions on Display

A policy option that municipal governments can consider is enacting an ordinance to restrict the display of tobacco products from stores<sup>7</sup>. Nearly 50% of Vermonters are in favor of a ban on the display of tobacco products prior to sale; 28% of local opinion leaders favor such a policy<sup>8</sup>.



## Contact

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For more information about Point of Sale and its impact on youth smoking, please visit Counter Balance at <http://counterbalancevt.com/>

<sup>1</sup> CENTER FOR PUBLIC HEALTH AND TOBACCO POLICY, THE LEGAL LANDSCAPE: VERMONT'S TOBACCO CONTROL LAWS (January 2012) available at [http://www.tobaccopolicycenter.org/documents/VT\\_Legal\\_Landscape\\_Updated.pdf](http://www.tobaccopolicycenter.org/documents/VT_Legal_Landscape_Updated.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> U.S. CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL & PREVENTION, Annual Smoking-Attributable Mortality, Years of Potential Life Lost, and Productivity Losses —United States 2000-2004, 57(45) MORBIDITY & MORTALITY WKLY. REP., Nov. 14, 2008, available at <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5745a3.htm>

<sup>3</sup> VT. STAT. ANN. tit. 18, §1741 et seq. (2011).

<sup>4</sup> VT. DEP'T OF HEALTH, 2012 VT ADULT TOBACCO SURVEY, available at <http://healthvermont.gov/pubs/documents/2008ATSReportFinal.pdf>.

<sup>5</sup> VT. DEP'T OF HEALTH, 2012 MACRO POLL, available at [http://healthvermont.gov/research/documents/tobacco\\_macro\\_poll.pdf](http://healthvermont.gov/research/documents/tobacco_macro_poll.pdf).

<sup>6</sup> Richard W. Pollay, More than Meets the Eye: On the Importance of Retail Cigarette Merchandising, 16 TOBACCO CONTROL 270, 271 (2007).

<sup>7</sup> CENTER FOR PUBLIC HEALTH AND TOBACCO POLICY, ADDRESSING THE POINT OF SALE: OPTIONS FOR REDUCING YOUTH TOBACCO USE IN VERMONT (March 2012) available at [http://www.tobaccopolicycenter.org/documents/VT\\_AddressingPOS.pdf](http://www.tobaccopolicycenter.org/documents/VT_AddressingPOS.pdf).

<sup>8</sup> VT. TOBACCO EVALUATION REVIEW BOARD, 2014 VT LOCAL OPINION LEADERS SURVEY, available at <http://humanservices.vermont.gov/boards-committees/tobacco-board/independent-comprehensive-state-tobacco-control-program-evaluation/vermont-local-opinion-leader-survey-technical-report/view>