



PLUMAS RURAL SERVICES

Serving People, Strengthening Families, Building Communities

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March 29, 2016

Plumas County Board of Supervisors
520 Main Street
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Dear Plumas County Board of Supervisors,

Our Mission, as Plumas Rural Services, is to provide services and opportunities for the well-being of local residents and families to improve quality of life and self-sufficiency by promoting health, education, prevention and treatment.

It is an unfortunate truth that tobacco use is still the leading cause of preventable death and disease in California and the costs of this burden fall heavily on the underserved and high-risk populations, whom we serve. Besides the cost of personal use and medical expenses, and loss of quality of life and health, it also costs those who don't smoke, at an average of \$699 for every person in Plumas County. This is the cost every person bears yearly for in direct healthcare, illness, and premature death attributed to smoking and illness resulting from it.

As our mission indicates, we want to promote health and opportunities for well-being for those in Plumas County. While smoking is a choice, we know that the tobacco industry has had a history of targeting youth to start smoking early, which when started before 18, often creates a life-long addiction to this deadly habit. While our state has laws against selling tobacco to minors, this has not proven to be an effective law in Plumas County. Youth are often able to buy tobacco from our local stores, as indicated by the 25% illegal sales rate in Plumas County this year.

The best way to keep tobacco away from kids and to help curb this potentially life-long addiction is to stop selling it to them. California's current law penalizes only the clerk who sells the tobacco, which hurts our individual, usually low-income, residents, and does not change the priority of the store to make sure no sales are made to minors. This is why we strongly support the Tobacco Retail Licensing policy that holds the proprietor responsible for sales made in their stores.

Requiring a local license or permit to sell tobacco products sends retailers the message that we are serious about protecting our kids from the deadly addiction of tobacco. Furthermore, incentivizing retailers with a reduced license fee when participating in a Healthy Retail Initiative will not only lessen the burden on retail owners, but also will assist in shaping a healthy environment for all Plumas County residents.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration,

Michele Lynn Piller
Executive Director