



# TOBACCO-FREE NORTH COAST

[www.tobaccofreenorthcoast.org](http://www.tobaccofreenorthcoast.org)

11/2/20

Dear Chair Haschak and Members of the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors,

I wish to present information that will help illustrate how a local Tobacco Retail License (TRL) policy can help reduce youth access to addictive tobacco products.

On October 30, 2020 between the hours of 11:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m., our project sponsored a young adult tobacco purchase survey. Working with an 18-year-old young man (decoy), we surveyed 16 stores near the City of Ukiah from Redwood Valley to Hopland. Of the stores visited, 6 of them sold tobacco to our decoy. This is an illegal sales rate of 37.5%. Compare this to a [state-wide](#) rate of 17.9%. In more than one in three attempts, our young adult decoy was able to purchase tobacco in person at local retailers (see photo of tobacco products purchased).

Local retail sales are not the only source where young people get tobacco, but clearly an important one. California's [STAKE Act](#) now requires multi-level age verification for internet sales upon purchase AND delivery. At least [54](#) jurisdictions in California have used their TRL policy to completely eliminate the sale of flavored tobacco, like the "wine" and "Russian Cream" our decoy targeted. Local TRL policies are an evidenced-based practice, and with a license fee adequate to support local enforcement, give a community tools to prevent kids from getting hooked on nicotine.



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