

REVISED MOTION BY SUPERVISOR MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS

March 6, 2018

Addressing Nuisance Tobacco Shops

A 2017 study by the University of California Riverside, School of Medicine showed that South Los Angeles tobacco shops, or “smoke shops,” are associated with high levels of violent and property crimes around their locations. The data suggested that smoke shops “may constitute nuisance properties associated with dangerous neighborhood conditions for crime and violence in South Los Angeles, and perhaps similar low-income urban communities of color.”

This study empirically supports the widespread concern from the community. According to Community Coalition’s 2017 South Los Angeles People’s Poll of over 4,000 residents, 64% of adults and 44% of youth are “very concerned” with criminal activity at, and surrounding, smoke shops. According to the same poll, 61% of adults and 41% of youth are also concerned with loitering at smoke shops.

Nuisance properties can attract robberies, drug use, and other crimes, making them unsafe zones for residents, particularly in low-income communities. This further

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contributes to economic disinvestment, blight, social disorganization and community-level trauma. However, appropriate regulations of these nuisance properties can promote healthy physical, social, and economic environments for these communities.

I THEREFORE MOVE THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS: Instruct the Director of the Department of Public Health, in collaboration with the Director of Regional Planning, County Counsel, Sheriff, Treasurer and Tax Collector, and key community stakeholders, to report back on nuisance tobacco shops, due to the Board of Supervisors in writing in 120 days, including:

1. Assessment of the number and location of tobacco shops in unincorporated Los Angeles County, and their impact on community health and safety;
2. Assessment of the best practices and regulatory mechanisms to address nuisance tobacco shops, including, but not limited to, changes to the Tobacco Retailer License requirements, Title 7 Business Licenses, density and zoning restrictions, and Conditional Use Permits;
3. Evaluation of disparate health impacts related to these nuisance properties;
4. Mechanisms to track and monitor tobacco shops; and,
5. Existing and new targeted education and outreach strategies to reduce tobacco and other substance use.

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(HS/CT)