

RESOLUTION NO. 100-06

**RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF RICHMOND IN SUPPORT OF THE
TOBACCO TAX ACT OF 2006**

WHEREAS, the Tobacco Tax Act of 2006 is a state initiative which if passed by voters in November 2006 would raise the state's tobacco tax by an additional \$2.60/pack. According to the California Department of Health Services, the tax increase alone would prevent 700,000 children currently under 17 years of age from becoming smokers in adulthood; high school and middle school student smoking prevalence would decline by 42.8%; more than half a million smokers in California would quit smoking; and

WHEREAS, the Tobacco Tax Act would produce more than \$2 billion in annual revenue to fund children's health insurance, emergency room care, nursing education, disease prevention, medical research and programs that will reduce smoking, especially among children; and

WHEREAS, 4.5 million Californians smoke and nearly 75,000 a year try their first cigarette, and these smokers put a significant burden on our economy and our hospitals and healthcare systems costing an estimated \$235 million annually in Contra Costa County in healthcare costs; and,

WHEREAS, the Tobacco Tax Act would significantly reduce the burden on state and local healthcare agencies of treating the uninsured by providing basic health insurance coverage including primary care and hospitalization to California's 800,000 uninsured children – nearly 10% -- by expanding eligibility and simplifying enrollment in the state's Medi-Cal and Healthy Families public health insurance programs for children; and

WHEREAS, the Tobacco Tax Act would provide funding for outreach to enroll *currently* eligible children into the Medi-Cal and the Healthy Families programs, generating additional revenues to local communities including \$1,112 annually in state and federal funding for each child enrolled or a total of \$390 million in additional annual revenue if all currently eligible children are enrolled; and

WHEREAS, the Tobacco Tax Act is expected to generate significant additional savings for the 17 counties operating their own children's health coverage initiatives because these children would now be eligible for state programs funded by tobacco tax revenues; and

WHEREAS, the Tobacco Tax Act would provide more than 700 community-based clinics throughout the state, including 15 clinic sites in Contra Costa County alone, with much needed dollars to continue to provide primary health care services to uninsured and underinsured children and adults, thereby alleviating the overuse of local emergency rooms; and

WHEREAS, the Tobacco Tax Act is expected to reduce state and local government healthcare costs over time through reduced tobacco use and tobacco related disease as well as through expanded state health programs; and

WHEREAS, the Tobacco Tax Act will provide needed funds for emergency rooms and critical care services (seventy California hospital emergency rooms have closed their doors in the past ten years). Reducing smoking and funding emergency care will help keep community emergency rooms open; and,

WHEREAS, the Tobacco Tax Act will increase sales tax revenues to local governments by tens of millions of dollars annually.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the City Council of the City of Richmond does hereby support the Tobacco Tax Act of 2006, which will reduce smoking, especially among children and fund critical healthcare priorities such as children's health insurance, emergency room care, disease prevention and medical research; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a suitable copy of this resolution be transmitted to the Coalition for a Healthy California and to the City of Richmond's legislative representatives in Sacramento, and to the Speaker of the California Assembly, Senate President Pro Tempore, and to the Governor.

I certify that the foregoing resolution was passed and adopted by the Council of the City of Richmond at a regular meeting thereof held September 12, 2006, by the following vote:

AYES: Councilmembers Bates, Butt, Griffin, Marquez,
McLaughlin, Rogers, Thurmond, and Mayor Anderson

NOES: None

ABSTENTIONS: None

ABSENT: Vice-Mayor Viramontes

DIANE HOLMES
Clerk of the City of Richmond

(SEAL)

Approved:

IMRA L. ANDERSON
Mayor

Approved as to form:

JOHN EASTMAN
City Attorney

State of California }
County of Contra Costa : ss.
City of Richmond }

I certify that the foregoing is a true copy of Resolution No. 100-06, finally passed and adopted by the Council of the City of Richmond at a meeting held on September 12, 2006.