

BEFORE THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
OF THE COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ, STATE OF CALIFORNIA

RESOLUTION NO.

On the motion of Supervisor  
duly seconded by Supervisor  
the following resolution is adopted.

A RESOLUTION OF THE COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ RECOGNIZING TOBACCO  
WASTE AS A PUBLIC HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL THREAT

WHEREAS, cigarette butts are the most littered item on Santa Cruz County's riverways and beaches, where they are washed into the Monterey Bay and contribute to a common form of litter in the world's oceans; and

WHEREAS, cigarette butts are an unsightly blight on Santa Cruz County sidewalks, parks, playgrounds, recreation trails, and other public spaces; and

WHEREAS, cigarette butts are made of cellulose acetate, a non-biodegradable plastic, which breaks down into microplastics and bioaccumulates in marine organisms; and

WHEREAS, cigarette butts are not just litter but toxic waste, leaching dangerous chemicals such as lead, arsenic, and nicotine into the environment; and

WHEREAS, improperly discarded cigarette butts can poison small children, pets, wildlife, and marine life; and

WHEREAS, improperly discarded cigarette butts are a fire hazard, responsible for burning 88,898 acres in California since 1980; and

WHEREAS, cigarette butts do not actually filter out harmful chemicals from cigarette smoke and provide no demonstrated health benefits to smokers; and

WHEREAS, emerging forms of tobacco waste include electronic cigarettes or vaping devices, and the e-juice, cartridges, batteries, and accessories associated with them; and

WHEREAS, tobacco waste is a health equity issue, disproportionately found in lower income communities and communities of color; and

WHEREAS, Big Tobacco takes no responsibility for its toxic waste, forcing the physical and financial burden of cleanup onto local government agencies and volunteer organizations; and

WHEREAS, previous approaches including anti-litter laws, anti-smoking signage, increased waste disposal containers, and robust cleanup efforts have failed to solve the problem.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors as follows:

1. That the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors hereby recognizes and declares tobacco waste a public health and environmental threat to the residents of the County.
2. That the Board of Supervisors resolves to create a tobacco waste ad hoc committee that will work with staff and local stakeholders to create a process for advancing policies to reduce or eliminate cigarette butt litter that include but are not limited to drafting an ordinance that would prohibit the sale of plastic filtered tobacco products in the County that would return for board action before January of 2025 unless extended.
3. That the Board of Supervisors directs the Chair to write a letter to the city councils of Santa Cruz and Watsonville expressing our support of their efforts and our commitment to joining them in addressing plastic tobacco litter and write a letter to Capitola and Scotts Valley urging them to join the County and cities of Watsonville and Santa Cruz in eliminating plastic cigarette butt waste.

PASSED AND ADOPTED at a regular meeting of the Board of Supervisors of the County of Santa Cruz, State of California, this 16<sup>th</sup> day of May 2023 by the following vote:

AYES: SUPERSVISORS  
 NOES: SUPERSVISORS  
 ABSTENTIONS: SUPERSVISORS  
 ABSENT: SUPERSVISORS

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Zach Friend  
 Chair of the Board

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Printed Name and Title

ATTEST:

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CLERK OF THE BOARD

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

*Jim Heats*  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Office of the County Counsel

5/5/2023 (AMS# 14501)

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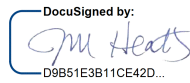
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**Signer Events**

Jason M. Heath  
 jason.heath@co.santa-cruz.ca.us  
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