On January 18th, 2015, Ordinance No. 259-14 went into effect creating a density restriction on the number of tobacco permits in San Francisco. A Health Impact Assessment (HIA) was conducted to evaluate how the land use changes amending the Health Code would reduce the availability and exposure of tobacco products in different communities and the subsequent health impacts on vulnerable populations.

**Reasons Why Important**

1. **1 in 5 American Deaths are Tobacco Related**
2. **9 in 10 Adult Smokers Started Before Age 18**
3. Retailer density near youths’ homes and schools increases the likelihood of tobacco initiation

**Ordinance Objectives**

- Reduce availability and access to tobacco products
- Reduce exposure and environmental cues to use tobacco products
- Reduce inequity of tobacco retailer density in vulnerable communities

**Vulnerable Populations**

- Residents in areas with a high density of tobacco retailer
- Residents in areas with a greater number of perceived neighborhood disorder issues (e.g. graffiti, litter)
- Low income residents
- Residents with low educational attainment
- Minors and young adults
- Homeless
- Mentally ill
- Veterans
- LGBT
- Former incarcerated residents

**Under the new law, no new tobacco permit will be granted if...**

- In a Supervisorial District with 45 or more active tobacco permits
- Within **500ft** to another active tobacco retailer
- Within **500ft** to a public or private K-12 school
- In a location not previously occupied by a tobacco retailer
Methodology: Baseline conditions before the ordinance effective date were compared to ten months later. The change was analyzed to evaluate the health impact on vulnerable populations.

### Retail Tobacco Permit Density Cap: Impacts

**Before the effective date**
- Active permits in December 2014: 1001

**10 months later, no new retailer growth**
- Active permits in October 2015: 900
  - Citywide decrease in tobacco retailers: 10%

### How did the new law impact vulnerable populations?

**Areas with high rates of...**

- Low Educational Attainment
- Poverty
- Homelessness
- Mental Illness
- Neighborhood disorder issues
- Citywide Average

**Change in tobacco permits**

- 12%↓
- 12%↓
- 16%↓
- 13%↓
- 11%↓
- 10%↓

**Additional Findings...**

- Tobacco retailer density was not significantly related to youths or to any specific minority population.
- Prior to the density cap, permits were declining at a 7% rate annually. Other potential causes of permit attrition include gentrification, owner retirement, change of business, or selling or transferring ownership.
- Tobacco retailers’ health potentially impacted by greater income insecurity and potential of losing a permit.

### Areas to monitor:

- Retailer attrition
- Efficiency in reaching vulnerable populations (especially minority populations)
- Potential opportunities in future legislation:
  - Analyze changes in business majority owner
- Evaluate efficiency of using Supervisorial Districts to set cap limit
- Investigate protecting additional youth facilities from retailer density (e.g. playgrounds, youth community centers, universities, etc.)