

Executive Summary

Rural Indiana's Attitude Toward Smoking and Smoke-Free Ordinances

Two thirds (66 percent) of adults in rural Indiana would support an ordinance that prohibits smoking in all workplaces including restaurants and bars.

Survey Introduction

- Indiana Tobacco Prevention and Cessation contacted the Survey Research Center to conduct a public opinion survey in four Indiana counties—which after weighing the data, represent rural Indiana (part of a larger project to study many Indiana counties).
- The survey's purpose was to assess public opinion about smoking, secondhand smoke and support for an ordinance requiring smoke-free public places.
- The survey sample was N=2418, representative of adults in Rural Indiana with a margin of error of no greater than +/- 3.9 percent. (83 percent registered voters, 98 percent white, about 23 percent had a college degree or higher, 18 percent are current smokers)

Smoke-free Workplaces

- Roughly 80 percent of rural Indiana adults who work indoors do so in a smoke-free environment.
- The majority of rural Indiana adults (85 percent) agree that all workers in a nearby city in their county should be protected from secondhand smoke in the workplace – 60 percent of those who currently smoke also agree.

Public Health

- Roughly 82 percent agree that restaurants, bars, and other public places would be healthier for customers and employees if they were smoke-free – Approximately half of those who currently smoke also agree.
- Just under three-fifths feel that exposure to secondhand smoke is a serious health hazard – Just under 30 percent of those who currently smoke agree.
- When asked about restaurants, bars, membership clubs, and other public places, over three-fourths (78 percent) of rural Indiana adults feel that rights of customers and employees to breathe smoke-free air is more important than the rights of smokers to smoke in those areas – Roughly 43 percent of current smokers agree.

Support for Smoke-free Workplaces

- Roughly two-thirds (66 percent) of rural Indiana adults would support an ordinance that prohibits smoking in all workplaces including restaurants, bars, and membership clubs in a nearby city in their county.
- Over half of rural Indiana adults (53 percent) say they would continue to go out as often as they do now; 31 percent say they would eat out more; 15 percent say they would eat out less.

Conclusion

- Strong recognition by the rural public of the hazards of secondhand smoke
- Majority would support an ordinance that would prohibit smoking in public places like restaurants, bars, and membership clubs in their local city
- No indication that passage of such a law would have a negative impact on local business; if anything there is some evidence that business might increase

For additional information or interviews, contact

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Appendix: Charts

Figure 1:

Percent of support among rural Indiana residents for making all workplaces smoke free including restaurants, bars and membership clubs.

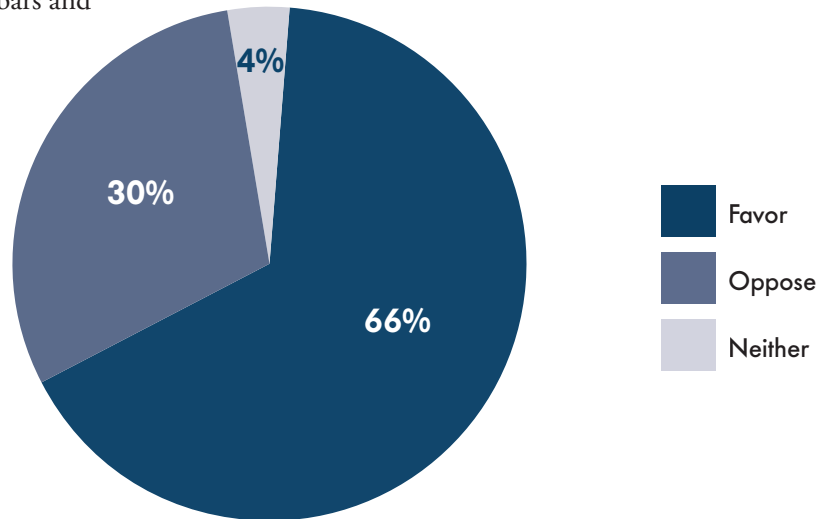


Figure 2:

Percentage who agree that workers should be protected from secondhand smoke in the workplace.

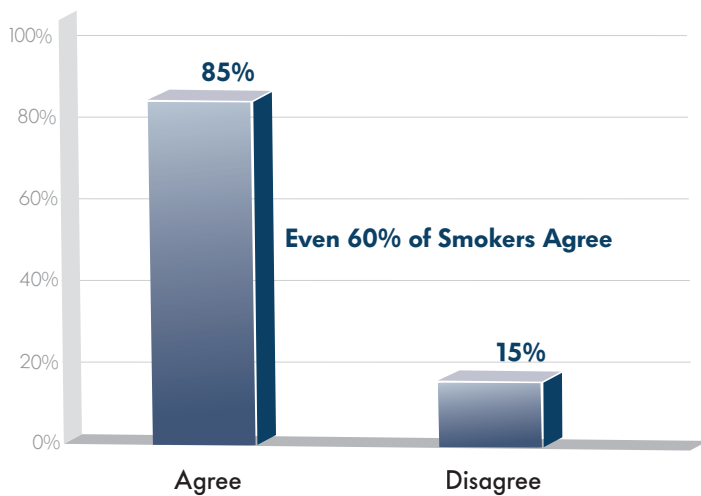


Figure 3:

Percentage who would go out more/less often if all public places, restaurants, bars and membership clubs were smoke free.

