

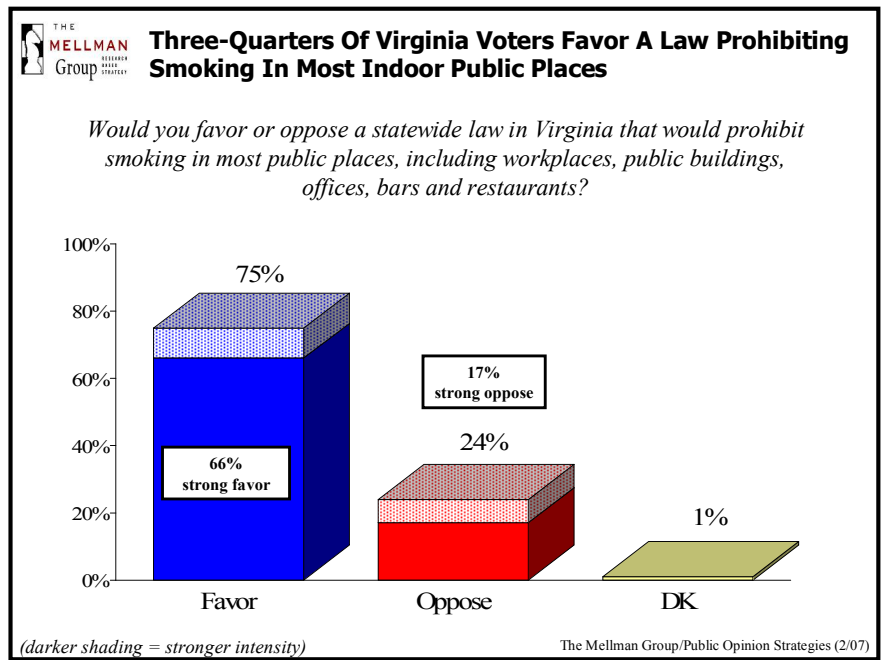


TO: The Campaign For Tobacco Free Kids
FROM: The Mellman Group, Inc.
RE: Support For A Smoke-Free Law In Virginia
DATE: January 29, 2008

The Mellman Group conducted a statewide survey of 500 registered voters in Virginia. The poll was conducted by telephone January 22-24, 2008, and used a registration-based sample. The margin of error for this survey is +/-4.4% at the 95% level of confidence. The margin of error is larger for subgroups

Virginia Voters Strongly Support A Law To Prohibit Smoking In Most Indoor Public Places

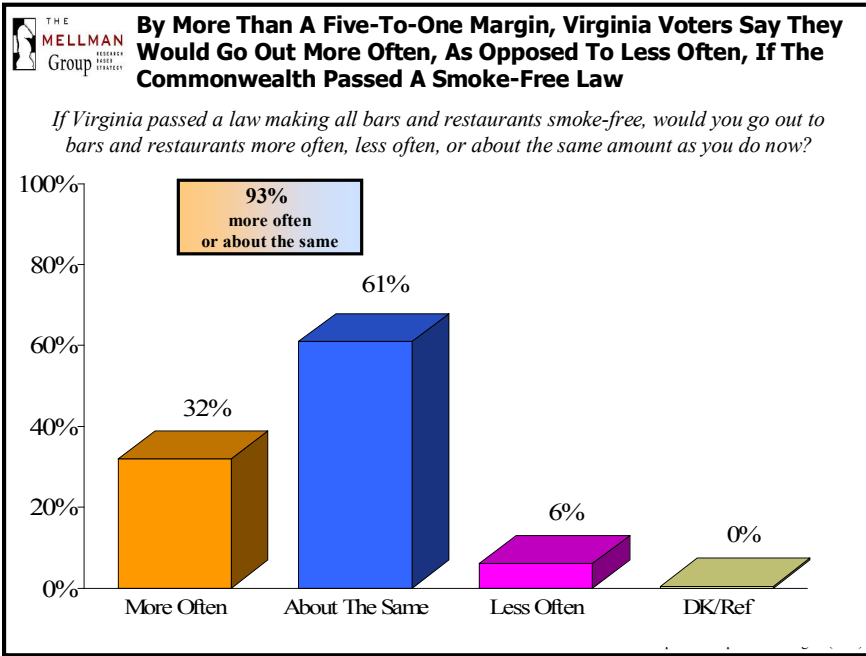
Our recently completed poll shows strong support among Virginia voters for a statewide law that would “prohibit smoking in most public places, including workplaces, public buildings, offices, bars and restaurants.” Three-quarters (75%) favor the law, while only 24% oppose it. Moreover, support for the law is intense. Nearly two-thirds (66%) not only say they support a smoke free law, but do so *strongly*. Only 17% *strongly* oppose such legislation.



As the chart at right indicates, majority support for a clean indoor air law cuts across party lines and demographic groups. There is bi-partisan consensus in favor of a smoke-free law, as sizable majorities of Democrats, independents and Republicans favor it. Support for the law is exceptionally strong among women (83% favor), college educated voters (70% favor) and those over 60 years old (82% favor), though it is important to note that men, voters without college degrees and younger voters also favor the law by wide margins. Voters favor the law by wide margins in every part of the commonwealth, especially in the Washington, DC, Norfolk and smaller media markets. While support in the Richmond market is a bit less robust, voters there still favor the law by a 21-point margin.

% Favor/Oppose Smoke-Free Law		
	Favor	Oppose
Men	65%	34%
Women	83%	15%
Democrat	83%	17%
Independent	71%	27%
Republican	71%	28%
18-39	70%	28%
40-59	74%	25%
60+	82%	17%
HS or Less	71%	28%
Some College	68%	31%
College Grad+	80%	19%
DC Metro	79%	20%
Richmond	60%	39%
Norfolk	76%	23%
Rest of State	76%	22%

Even though a majority of current and occasional smokers oppose a smoke-free law (39% favor, 57% oppose), it is noteworthy that nearly 4 in 10 smokers favor the law. Moreover, this group makes up only 18% of the electorate. Their opposition is dwarfed by strong support among the much larger number of non-smokers, including former smokers (76% favor, 24% oppose; 25% of the electorate), and those who have never smoked (85% favor, 14% oppose; 54% of the electorate).



There Is Evidence That A Smoke-Free Law Could Increase Patronage Of Restaurants And Bars

Contrary to the opinions expressed by some opponents of this law, there is evidence that a smoke-free law could actually *increase* patronage of restaurants and bars in Virginia. When asked how it would affect their patronage of bars and restaurants, nearly a third of voters (32%) said they would go to bars and restaurants more often if they were smoke free, while only 6% said they would go out less often. A total of 93% said

that they would go out either more often or the same amount as they do now.

Virginia Voters Recognize Dangers Of Secondhand Smoke And Believe The Right To Clean Air Trumps Smokers’ Rights

Strong support for a smoke-free law is a function of concerns about the danger of secondhand smoke and the priority accorded to the rights of customers/employees over those of smokers. Overall, 85% of the commonwealth’s voters believe secondhand smoke is at least a “moderate” health hazard, with a clear majority (64%) saying it constitutes a “serious health hazard.” Only 14% believe second hand smoke to be a “minor health hazard” or “not a health hazard at all.”

Virginia voters also attach greater priority to the right to breathe clean air in restaurants and bars over the right of smokers to smoke. When asked to choose whose rights are more important —those of customers and employees or those of smokers – 82% say “the rights of customers and employees to breathe clean air in restaurants and bars” takes precedence, while only 13% attach higher priority to “the rights of smokers to smoke inside restaurants and bars.” Even a majority of smokers (58%) agree that the rights of customers and employees to breathe clean air in restaurants is more important than their right to smoke in restaurants and bars.

Virginia voters overwhelmingly agree with the statements that all workers in the commonwealth should be protected from second-hand smoke, that restaurants and bars would be healthier for customers and employees if they were smoke-free, and that “it would be really nice to go out to restaurants and bars in Virginia without smelling like cigarette smoke when you get home.”

<i>% agreeing/disagreeing with statement</i>	Agree	Disagree
All workers in Virginia should be protected from exposure to secondhand smoke in the workplace	88%	10%
Restaurants and bars would be healthier for customers and employees if they were smoke-free	87%	11%
It would be really nice to go out and enjoy restaurants and bars in Virginia without smelling like cigarette smoke when you get home	86%	12%