

# CA bill would ban cigarette filters, single-use vape pods | The Sacramento Bee

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By Andrew Sheeler

A California bill would ban cigarette filters from being sold in the state. Mark Lennihan AP

A California lawmaker has introduced a bill to ban the sale of single-use tobacco or cannabis products – such as cigarette filters and vape pods – in the state, citing the damage those products do to both the human body and the environment.

Assembly Bill 1690, introduced by Assemblywoman Luz Rivas, D-San Fernando Valley, would authorize local governments to impose a \$500 fine against each person who sells, gives or otherwise furnishes a single-use tobacco or cannabis product in the state.

“For over half a century, single-use tobacco products have been nothing but a blight on our public health and environment,” Rivas said in a press conference announcing her bill.

The bill comes as Californians are set to go to the polls in November to decide whether to approve a law banning the sale of flavored tobacco in the state.

Heidi Sanborn, with the National Stewardship Action Council, said during the press conference that the bill isn’t targeting tobacco or cannabis specifically, but rather the waste that the single-use products leave behind.

Sanborn also pointed out that AB 1690 does not yet have a date for when it would go into effect if it is signed into law.

Nicholas Mallos, senior director of the Trash Free Seas program at the Ocean Conservancy, said during the press conference that cigarette butts account for about 30% of all the trash collected by volunteers in the state during the annual Coastal Cleanup Day.

Mallos pointed out that the cigarette filters contain plastics that don’t break down, which leach toxic chemicals and microplastics into the environment.

Assemblyman Mark Stone, D-Monterey Bay, pointed out that cigarette filters were a promotional marketing tool of the tobacco industry to make smoking seem safer, when they offer little real protection for the smoker.

“The fact is those filters really do nothing for the health outcomes for individuals who are smoking,” he said.

Stone has authored similar bills in the past which failed to advance. He attributed that past failure to the influence that the tobacco industry had on the Assembly Governmental Organization Committee, which reviewed those previous bills. AB 1690 will go before the Assembly Health Committee, a more natural fit, Stone said.

Rivas said the bill has strong support from several Democrats in both the Assembly and the Senate.

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Andrew Sheeler covers California's unique political climate for the Sacramento Bee. He has covered crime and politics from Interior Alaska to North Dakota's oil patch to the rugged coast of southern Oregon. He attended the University of Alaska Fairbanks.