

Smoking Solution? California Bill Would Eliminate Litter Left Behind By Smokers

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AUBURN (CBS13) — Sally Dawley, better known as the “Auburn Butt Lady,” has spent eight years picking up cigarette butts littered on the ground.

“Ten different days since I have started, I have picked up over 3,000 butts in one day,” Dawley explained.

For Dawley, the burned butts are not only a concern for the environment but to animals as well.

“I want to walk up to smokers and smack them with my broom,” Dawley said. “It’s like ‘Come on, people,’ these things are poison. Dogs will eat them.”

A new bill is now offering a solution to the litter left behind by smokers that would ban single-use filters on cigarettes. It’s an idea long-term smoker Dave Gunn said he could get behind.

“I think it would be a good thing for the environment. It would force the cigarette companies to come out with a better cigarette,” he said,

“Everything is filter if you look up there,” explained Jay Saini.

Saini owns Auburn Smoke and Vape and fears, if passed, the proposed law would cripple his business with 99% of his customers buying filtered products.

“I don’t think anybody could be in the business if that’s going to happen,” he said.

In a press conference Tuesday, Assemblyman Mark Stone (D-Monterey Bay), one of the sponsors of the bill, responded to pushback on health concerns of unfiltered cigarettes.

“Because of the way smokers draw from filtered cigarettes that with the filter on the cigarette they’re getting different types of cancers and potentially more aggressive types of cancers,” Stone explained.

Assemblywoman Luz Rivas (D-San Fernando Valley) expressed the importance of why she thinks the bill is needed.

“The toxic waste that cigarettes and cigars leave behind in the form of tobacco filters wreaks havoc on our environment,” she explained.

But do filtered and unfiltered cigarettes impact health in different ways?

A study highlighted in the National Center For Biotechnology Information by the Institute of Occupational Medicine, Social Medicine and Environmental Medicine at Goethe University in Germany claims filtered cigarettes are less harmful because of reduced toxicity of inhaled smoke.

If passed, anyone who continues to sell filtered cigarettes would face a \$500 fine per violation. It's a proposed smoking solution Dawley hopes will force her to get a new hobby.

"It's really important," she said. "Why have this poisonous stuff out there?"

Velena Jones

Velena Jones joined CBS13 as a reporter in April of 2020. Velena grew up in the Bay Area and is thrilled to be back in Northern California and the...[More from Velena Jones](#)