



Board of Supervisors

Paul Canepa, Chair, Second District

Sonny Dhaliwal, Vice Chair, Third District

Mario Gardea, First District

Steven J. Ding, Fourth District

Robert Rickman, Fifth District

Rachél DeBord, Clerk of the Board of Supervisors

For Immediate Release

February 26, 2025

Contact: **Katie Albertson, Public Information Specialist**
kalbertson@sjgov.org, 209-696-1853

Board Moves to Impose Moratorium on Smoke Shops
Protecting Children and Communities with Tougher Regulations

Stockton, CA – At today’s meeting, the San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors directed staff to draft an urgency ordinance imposing a moratorium on new smoke shops in unincorporated areas of the county. Staff will also develop stronger regulations and increased oversight to address concerns over the sale of illegal and unregulated products at these businesses.

“In communities like the ones I represent, we’re seeing multiple smoke shops opening in a small area,” said Board Chair Paul Canepa. “We need to work with our city partners to ensure our regulations align and don’t allow prohibited activities to thrive in unincorporated county pockets. Schools, parks, and children should all be considered when these licenses are issued.”

The Board directed county departments—including the Sheriff’s Office, District Attorney’s Office, Community Development, Code Enforcement, and Public Health Services—to propose updates to business and development regulations. Staff will also explore a tobacco retail licensing process for long-term oversight or potentially banning the sale of THC and hemp products to prevent illicit drug sales to local youth.

“We have seen evidence of illegal activities at these smoke shops, which pose a threat to our children and communities,” said District Five Supervisor Robert Rickman. “An emergency moratorium will allow us to put stronger regulations in place, ensuring these businesses operate responsibly and don’t contribute to public safety concerns.”

The urgency ordinance and moratorium will be presented for final consideration at the next Board of Supervisors meeting on March 11 at 9:00 AM in the County Administration Building in Stockton.

###

The Board of Supervisors is the governing body of San Joaquin County and serves more than 789,410 residents. The Board establishes County policies, passes local ordinances, approves the budget, sets local tax rates, supports community programs and provides many other essential services.