

The cigarette tax smoke — Stop! We're choking on the smoke screen! Judging by their television commercials, opponents of Proposition 99 — a.k.a. cigarette companies — are desperate. They realize that if voters aren't shielded from the facts, the measure is sure to pass on Nov. 8.

Proposition 99 would raise the tax on a pack of cigarettes to 35 cents. For the last 20 years, the tax has been 10 cents, one of the lowest in the country.

Proponents of the measure estimate that it would raise about \$650 million a year. From that total, \$202.5 million would be earmarked to cover medical costs of indigent patients, \$130 million would go for educational programs to describe the dangers of smoking, \$32.5 million for research of smoking-related diseases and \$32.5 million for improving parks and wildlife areas which, at times, are threatened by fires set by careless smokers.

The remaining \$162.5 million could be spent by the Legislature on any of those programs.

If we do have reservations about the measure, it's that so many programs shouldn't be dependent on a special tax. But given the current difficulty in scrap-

ing up funds for state programs, it may be one of the few realistic alternatives. When you finally blow away the smoke, the decision on Proposition 99 should be as clear as crystal. Vote yes.

—Tribune of San Diego

Taxing toilet paper

Every time revenue is needed, taxes are raised on cigarettes. It is an unfair tax that does not tax all of the people who are recipients, and is geared to prey on the weak.

It would make more sense to tax condoms, sanitary napkins and toilet paper. This would hit the mainstream of our society and the voting-age people. The money generated could be used as seen on TV ads, but include AIDS research and AIDS prevention.

Parents teach their children from early adolescence not to smoke and the harm it can cause. Why would school education work where the parent has failed? Money down the tube.

To put a 25-cent tax on a four-pack of toilet paper would not be all that bad. Ask any welfare recipient if food stamps can be used to purchase toilet paper. The answer's no. It is considered a luxury item, not a necessity.

LEN GASIOROWSKI

Bryte.

'Go to health'

There are many initiatives that voters are being asked to consider in November. So, at best, it is difficult to learn about them, evaluate both sides and finally make the decision. It is even more difficult when an initiative is unfairly represented and here I speak specifically to Proposition 99 — the tobacco tax initiative.

Opponents of Proposition 99 — the well-funded tobacco lobby — are using every deceptive and emotional ploy from conjured tobacco black markets to the unrelated issue of handguns in an effort to confuse the public.

Proposition 99 is simple. It will increase the cigarette tax by 25 cents per pack. It will raise \$650 million a year to be used in health education, research, health services and environmental protection.

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← I READ YOUR LIPS!
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YOU

IGNORANT
BIGOT

READ MY LIPS - ENCLOSED!