

# Kentuckians' opinions on a statewide smoke-free law

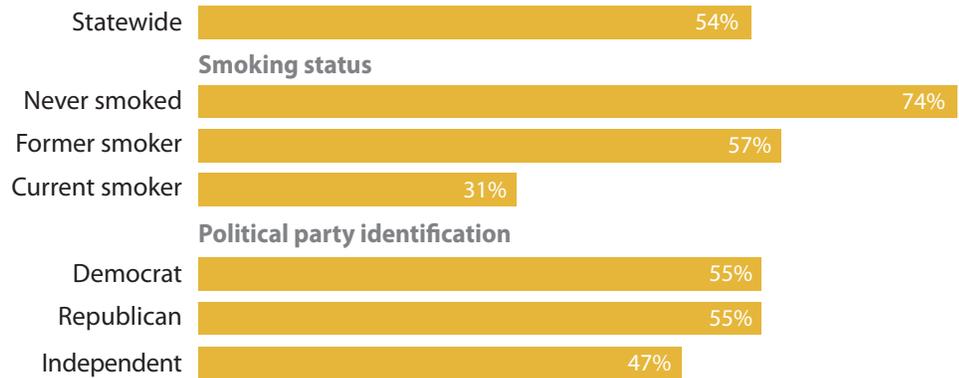
Secondhand smoke exposure poses significant health risks, and smoke-free environments are the only way to fully protect nonsmokers from these hazards.<sup>1</sup> To mitigate these risks, many Kentucky communities have adopted smoke-free policies. Currently, 1 in 3 Kentucky residents is protected by a local smoke-free policy.<sup>2</sup> To protect everyone, the Kentucky legislature is considering a statewide law eliminating smoking in all indoor public places.

To learn what Kentuckians think about this proposed law, the Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky and The Health Foundation of Greater Cincinnati included a question on the most recent **Kentucky Health Issues Poll (KHIP)**.

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2006) *The Health Consequences of Involuntary Exposure to Tobacco Smoke: A Report of the Surgeon General*.

<sup>2</sup> Kentucky Center for Smoke-Free Policy. (2011) Percent of Kentucky Population Covered by 100% Smoke-free Workplace Laws or Regulations. Retrieved from <http://www.mc.uky.edu/tobacco-policy/Ordinances/Smoke-freeOrdinances.HTM>.

**Would you favor or oppose a state law in Kentucky that would prohibit smoking in most public places, including workplaces, public buildings, offices, restaurants and bars?** Graph presents only those who favor a state law



## Majority of adults favor smoke-free law

More than half of Kentucky adults favored a statewide smoke-free law (54%), while 43% opposed a law, and 4% had no opinion.<sup>3</sup> This is an increase in support from 2010, when Kentuckians were split about the law (48% in favor/48% opposed).<sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup> These percentages do not add to 100% because of rounding.

<sup>4</sup> In 2010, KHIP asked "Would you favor or oppose a statewide smoke-free law in Kentucky?"

Support for the law increases as age, income and level of education increase. Support was higher among women (64%) than men (43%).

## Support stronger among registered voters

Among respondents who were registered to vote, nearly 6 in 10 favored a statewide smoke-free law (58%), while 38% opposed a law and 4% had no opinion. Support

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These findings unless otherwise noted are from the Kentucky Health Issues Poll, funded by the Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky and The Health Foundation of Greater Cincinnati. The Kentucky Health Issues Poll was conducted Sept. 27-Oct. 27, 2011, by the Institute for Policy Research at the University of Cincinnati. A random sample of 1,621 adults from throughout Kentucky was interviewed by telephone. This included 1,313 landline interviews and 308 cell phone interviews. In 95 of 100 cases, the statewide estimates will be accurate to  $\pm 2.5\%$ . There are other sources of variation inherent in public opinion studies, such as non-response, question wording or context effects that can introduce error or bias.

For more information about the Kentucky Health Issues Poll, please visit [www.healthy-ky.org](http://www.healthy-ky.org) or [www.healthfoundation.org/khip.html](http://www.healthfoundation.org/khip.html).

among registered voters was significantly higher than among non-voters.

Democrats (55%) and Republicans (55%) reported similar levels of support for a statewide smoke-free law. Slightly fewer than half of Independents (47%) supported a law.

## **Highest support among non-smokers**

There is a strong relationship between support for a statewide smoke-free law and whether one smokes. Of those who had never smoked, 3 in 4 favored a smoke-free law (74%). More than half of individuals who had smoked

previously (57%) also supported a law. Nearly 4 in 10 KHIP respondents said they were a current smoker (39%).<sup>5</sup> Of these, just 3 in 10 current smokers (31%) favored a statewide smoke-free law.

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<sup>5</sup> The 2010 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System estimate of adult smokers in Kentucky was only 25%, which was lower than what KHIP found. Retrieved from [www.cdc.gov/brfss/](http://www.cdc.gov/brfss/).