

Council finalizes smoking ban

November 22, 2020



By a 4-1 vote, the Crescent City Council passed an ordinance banning smoking at multi-unit facilities in the city limits.

The vote passed the second reading of an ordinance that was first approved two weeks ago.

The ordinance will go into effect in January 2021. Landlords will have until June to share the information with all their tenants and by January 2022, all leases will include the ban in their agreements. Those violating the ordinance could face fines of between \$250 and \$1,000.

The vote Monday mirrored the same vote two weeks earlier. The lone holdout was Councilman Jason Greenough.

"We've talked about this ad nauseam the last three to four months," Greenough said. "I think this is a liberty issue. I think there are things in place in the state of California to take care of issues like this, and I really feel it needs to be left between people who are making the decisions on the ground, meaning the people who own the property and the people who are renting. That's why I'm going to vote no on this. I'm not a smoker. I don't think smoking is a good habit to have, but I can't vote yes on this because of the liberty issue."

City resident Robert Derego also urged a no vote.

"To me, it's going to be like getting pulled over in your home," he said. "You take a license and you say I can get pulled over on the road. Now we're going to pull people over in their home. I would love it if you were to delay this one meeting and change it so the police department won't enforce it. I think it's between them and their landlord."

But there were also residents in favor of the smoking ban.

"I really commend you all for considering this," Amber Wier said. "This is something that protects people who can't protect themselves."

Wier said while talking to local residents about the issue, 35 percent of people living in multi-unit homes had health conditions that could be aggravated with second-hand smoke.

"I would move into a condo in a heartbeat, but my fear is having to smell pot and cigarettes," Natalie Fahning said. "To have to deal with that and live with that, I pity the people. Please, protect those who cannot have a word."

While banning smoking inside multi-unit homes, the ordinance does allow landlords to create smoking areas outdoors. The smoking areas must be 25 feet from where smoke can reach others and must be clearly marked.

Mayor Pro Tem Heidi Kime made a motion to approve the ordinance and Councilman Alex Fallman seconded it. Mayor Blake Inscore and Councilman Isaiah Wright also voted in favor of the ban.