

Opinion

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Proposition 86 will save lives

I would like to thank the Mercury News for its strong support of Proposition 86 in the editorial "Vote to Reduce Smoking" (Oct. 12). When all is said and done, the simple truth is that Proposition 86 will protect our children and save lives. Approximately 80 percent of smokers become addicted as minors, and research has shown that higher cigarette prices lead to lower youth smoking rates. This initiative would prevent

700,000 kids from becoming regular smokers and save 300,000 Californians from smoking-related deaths. Furthermore, the measure would save the state \$16.5 billion in future health care costs and raise \$2 billion in the first year alone to address a number of California's major health challenges.

We join the Mercury News in urging all Californians to vote "yes" on 86.

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