

Good evening, Mayor Andersen and City Council, my name is Vanessa Hernandez and I am an Oakland resident and a member of the Eden Youth Advisory Council. I am in 7<sup>th</sup> grade, and I go to Northern Light School in Oakland. I would like to give public comment today because Piedmont can be a frontrunner in the fight against Big Tobacco by ending the sale of all commercial tobacco products citywide. Please act now to inspire other cities to join this effort to protect youth and residents from a lifetime of addiction to tobacco.

As a student and member of the Youth Advisory Council, I have seen and heard what the effects of tobacco use and secondhand smoke have on people. Piedmont currently has no tobacco retailers, as the one tobacco retailer is currently closed for renovations. This provides the perfect opportunity to prevent tobacco sales from happening rather than having to stop them once the store has already restocked tobacco products. Plus, ending tobacco sales now would encourage the single retailer to consider alternatives to tobacco in its business model when it reopens.

Although most people who use tobacco begin in their youth, ending the sale of tobacco products can have a big benefit to adults who currently smoke by encouraging them to quit. The majority of people who smoke want to quit, wish they had never started, and do not want their kids to start.

I ask that the City Council of Piedmont join other California cities in not allowing the sale of commercial tobacco products to protect youth, residents, and future generations. Thank you for your time!