

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS, COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT, STATE OF CALIFORNIA
Certified copy of portion of proceedings, Meeting of January 9, 2024

Resolution 24-4

**Resolution of the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors Addressing the Sale,
Distribution and Use of Nitrous Oxide in Humboldt County**

WHEREAS, nitrous oxide, also known as laughing gas, is a colorless gas that is commonly used as an anesthetic for dental and other medical procedures, as well as being used as a charging agent for whipped cream canisters; and

WHEREAS, the use of nitrous oxide for recreational drug purposes has become popular and has been linked to serious health problems, which can cause physical and mental illness, injury and in some cases, even death; and

WHEREAS, nitrous oxide is classified as an inhalant which is a volatile substance that produces chemical vapors that can be inhaled to induce a psychoactive, or mind-altering, effect, according to the National Institute on Drug Abuse; and

WHEREAS, if sufficient amounts are inhaled, nitrous oxide produces anesthesia — a loss of sensation — and can lead to unconsciousness, belligerence, apathy, impaired judgment and impaired functioning in work or social situations and nausea and vomiting; and

WHEREAS, exposure to high doses can cause confusion and delirium and inhalant users may experience dizziness, drowsiness, slurred speech, lethargy, depressed reflexes, general muscle weakness and stupor; and

WHEREAS, nitrous oxide is often sold in canisters called “whippits” and can be purchased at smoke shops; and

WHEREAS, California Penal Code section 381b makes it a misdemeanor, punishable by up to six months in county jail, to possess nitrous oxide with the intent to inhale it to get high; and

WHEREAS, California Penal Code section 381c makes it misdemeanor to sell or furnish nitrous oxide to a minor; and

WHEREAS, California Penal Code section 381d makes it a misdemeanor for any person to dispense or distribute nitrous oxide for any purpose if it is known or should be known that the nitrous oxide is going to be used for recreational drug purposes and the person then causes great bodily injury or death to themselves or another person; and

WHEREAS, the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors wants to pursue solutions that address the sale of whippets locally as they are easily accessible and are dangerous when inhaled and can negatively impact children and youth; and

WHEREAS, addressing the uncontrolled sales and distribution of nitrous oxide in the County of Humboldt will reduce the number of people in possession and use of nitrous oxide as an intoxicating drug and will promote public health, safety and welfare.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors hereby advise the Humboldt County Department of Health & Human Services – Public Health to address the illicit sale, distribution and use of nitrous oxide through education and policy approaches and bring back such recommendations at a later date.

Dated: January 9, 2024



Rex Bohn, Board Chair
Humboldt County Board of Supervisors

Adopted on motion by Supervisor Bushnell, Seconded by Supervisor Wilson, and the following vote:

AYES: Supervisors: Wilson, Bushnell, Bohn

NOES:

ABSENT: Supervisors: Madrone, Arroyo

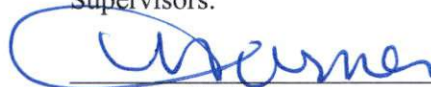
ABSTAIN:

STATE OF CALIFORNIA

County of Humboldt

I, KATHY HAYES, Clerk of the Board of Supervisors, County of Humboldt, State of California, do hereby certify the foregoing to be a full, true, and correct copy of the original made in the above-entitled matter by said Board of Supervisors at a meeting held in Eureka, California as the same now appears of record in my Office.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the Seal of said Board of Supervisors.



NIKKI TURNER
Deputy Clerk of the Board of Supervisors of
The County of Humboldt, State of California