



NYC Looks to Ban Smokeless Tobacco at Yankee Stadium and Citi Field

By Robert J. Marlow, 2-6-2016

Following in a path carved by Boston, San Francisco, and Los Angeles, New York City aims to launch a bill that would ban smokeless tobacco from Yankee Stadium and Citi Field.

City council member Corey Johnson introduced the bill on Friday which would prohibit the use of the substance at the home of the Yankees and the Mets along with other public arenas in the five boroughs, the *New York Times* reported.

The president of Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, Matthew Myers, claims "If New York passes this bill, and I think it will, it moves us dramatically closer to the day when smokeless tobacco is prohibited in all major league cities."

Starting with the 2016 MLB season, AT&T Park in San Francisco, Dodger Stadium in Los Angeles, and Fenway Park in Boston all ban the use of smokeless tobacco both on the field and in the clubhouse.

The *Times* further reports that both MLB and the players' union demonstrated signs that a movement to bar chewing tobacco was underway when they hired the director of the Rutgers University tobacco-dependence program, Dr. Michael Steinberg, to serve as a consultant to help players kick the popular habit.

The Professional Baseball Athletic Trainers Society released a study in 2014 indicating that as many as one in three major leaguers use smokeless tobacco.

Johnson, the chairman of the Council's Committee on Health, wants to fast track the bill, get it approved by the end of February for Mayor Bill de Blasio to sign, and instated by the start of the 2016 season.

New York Mets superstar third baseman David Wright weighed in on the potential ban, saying, "On one hand, I would argue we are adults and that's a choice we choose to make." Yet, he added, "On the other hand, we are role models and the last thing we want is for an underage kid to begin using because they watched their favorite players do it."

Craig Calcaterra points out in his article at NBC Sports that Minor League Baseball already bans players from using smokeless tobacco and MLB prohibits major league players from using it when cameras are present during games.

He adds that "in a larger sense, I appreciate that there are some sticky considerations when it comes to regulating the otherwise legal behavior of consenting adults, but I don't lose much sleep over tobacco regulation in public places. People talk about slippery slopes and the like, but tobacco is different and far more dangerous than large sodas."

<http://www.breitbart.com/sports/2016/02/06/nyc-looks-to-ban-smokeless-tobacco-at-yankees-stadium-and-citi-field/>