



## **America Heads Closer to Blanket Ban on Smokeless Tobacco in Ball Parks**

2-28-16

By Ed Jones

Support is growing for a proposed ban on the use of smokeless tobacco in ball parks and sports venues across New York City.

The New York Mets have indicated their approval of the move, which campaigners believe to be of crucial importance for the health and welfare of kids nationwide.

“Preventing children from being exposed to smokeless tobacco is an important initiative and we are glad to play our part in achieving this important goal,” read the statement from the Mets.

“The New York Mets join Major League Baseball in the support of the local law to ban smokeless tobacco in New York ticketed arenas, stadiums and ballparks.”

It appears not every player on the field shares the same sentiments however – some apparently not seeing the bigger picture for what it really is.

“We don’t really know the details yet. We haven’t been told how they are going to enforce it,” argued Curtis Granderson.

“Are they (going to) come on the field and give us a ticket? How do you enforce it? Is it going to be a city or state fine, a baseball fine? There are a lot of things we still have to find out.”

Speaking with the Daily News, Councilman Corey Johnson outlined exactly why he believes the proposed ban is of such critical importance.

“I couldn’t imagine us being OK as city or society as a whole with a baseball player standing in left field smoking a cigarette while the game was going on, on national television,” he said.

But it seems to be, just because of culturally what has existed for a long time, it’s OK for professional athletes to stand in left field or in the dugout and chew wads of smokeless tobacco.”

Early last summer, San Francisco became the first US state to lobby for an outright ban on chewing tobacco in the city's ball parks.

"It's a step in the right direction," commented Giants manager Bruce Bochy at the time, who admitted being hooked on tobacco for much of his life until finally undergoing hypnosis to quit.

"It's a tough deal for some of these players who have grown up playing with it and there are so many triggers in the game,"

"I certainly don't endorse it. With my two sons, the one thing I asked them is don't ever start dipping."

Mathew L. Myers, Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids President, also saluted the move.

"Today, San Francisco entered the history books as the first city to take tobacco out of baseball," he said.

"The home for the world champion Giants has set an example that all of Major League Baseball and the rest of the country should quickly follow,"

"Mayor Lee and the board of supervisors understand that the athletes are role models for impressionable youth," he added.

"When baseball stars use smokeless tobacco, the kids who look up to them are much more likely to as well. Our national pastime should have nothing to do with promoting a deadly and addictive product."

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