

BOARD OF HEALTH RESOLUTION

Reducing the Burden of Disease Related to Early Initiation of Tobacco Use through Increasing the Legal Age of Tobacco Purchase to 21 Years

WHEREAS, Smoking is the leading cause of preventable death in the United States and responsible for 20% of the country's deaths (1-2);

WHEREAS, thirty percent of the 4,700 persons in the United States under the age of 21 who smoke their first cigarette today will become daily smokers, and one-third to one-half of daily smokers will die from a disease related to smoking (3);

WHEREAS, early smoking initiation is linked to higher rates of nicotine addiction and increasing challenges in later attempts at smoking cessation (4-5);

WHEREAS, Jefferson County and Alabama rates of high-school age and adult smoking remain above national averages (6);

WHEREAS, Tobacco usage is significant among Alabama's 9th to 12th graders with 35.5% using tobacco in the 30 days prior to survey and with 14.0% smoking cigarettes daily (7);

WHEREAS, Jefferson County, Alabama's 2012 infant mortality rate, 9.6 per 1,000 live births, was substantially higher than the national rate of 6.14 deaths per 1,000 live births (8), and whereas 5.3%-7.7% of preterm births, a significant cause of infant mortality, and 23.2%-33.6% of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) deaths are attributable to maternal smoking (8-9);

WHEREAS, previous efforts to limit access of minors to tobacco through the restriction of tobacco sales to minors have reduced tobacco use prevalence in this population (10);

WHEREAS, the legal age for purchasing tobacco products in Alabama is currently 19 despite widespread support for raising the minimum age for purchasing tobacco to age 21 among smokers and non-smokers, different regions of the country, and different political parties (11-14);

WHEREAS, Eighty-one percent of adult smokers began smoking before the age 21, more than 50% of current adult smokers were regularly smoking before the age 18, and individuals between the ages of 18 and 20 are a major supplier of cigarettes to adolescents (15, 16);

WHEREAS, the National Academy of Medicine's (formerly the Institute of Medicine) 2015 study stated that raising the minimum legal age for purchase of tobacco products to 21 will create significant public health benefits including:

- Decreasing smoking-related deaths by 10%, and preventing 223,000 premature among individuals born between 2000 and 2019;
- Reducing overall smoking prevalence by 12%;
- Decreasing the smoking rates for 15-17 year olds by 25% and by 15% among 18-20 year olds;
- Delaying initiation of smoking among individuals less than 21 years of age;
- Reducing the number of pre-term births by 286,000 and low-birthweights by 438,000;

- Reducing healthcare costs associated with tobacco use and increasing length and quality of life (15, 17-18).

WHEREAS, the American Academy of Pediatrics “strongly recommends the minimum age to purchase tobacco products, including e-cigarettes, be increased to age 21” nationally (19);

WHEREAS, “Tobacco 21” laws are a tool to reduce access by youth to tobacco products by prohibiting the sale of tobacco products to individuals less than 21 years of age (20);

WHEREAS, the American Lung Association launched “Tobacco 21” on August 30, 2016 recommending Alabama and the remaining 47 states and District of Columbia join Hawaii and California in raising the legal sale age for tobacco to 21 (15);

WHEREAS, as of December 2, 2016, over 200 cities and two states have adopted “Tobacco 21” laws (12);

WHEREAS, a multivariate analysis of the impact of raising the legal age for the purchase of tobacco in Needham, Massachusetts, the first city in the country to adopt such a law, to age 21 revealed a 47% reduction in the rate of smoking among high school students (21);

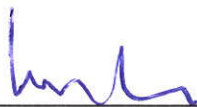
WHEREAS, a study published in 2014 by the American Journal of Public Health found increasing the minimum age of cigarette purchase to 21 would result in only a 2% immediate loss in total cigarette sales in the United States (22-23);

WHEREAS, several studies reveal healthcare cost savings from raising the minimum legal age for tobacco purchase to 21 exceeds the resulting loss of revenue from tobacco sales taxes (24 -27);

BE IT RESOLVED that the Jefferson County Board of Health Endorses:

- 1) The development of draft legislation and policies to prohibit the sale of tobacco or nicotine products* to persons under the age of 21 years.
- 2) Advocacy efforts by the Health Officer for local or state-wide adoption of measures to make illegal the sale of tobacco or nicotine products* to persons under the age of 21 years.
- 3) Utilization of Jefferson County Department of Health resources, financial and human, to educate county residents, policy makers and healthcare professionals about the health benefits of making the sale of tobacco or nicotine products* to persons less than 21 years of age illegal.

* Excludes products approved by the Food and Drug Administration for use in tobacco cessation.



Max Michael, III, MD, Chair
Jefferson County Board of Health

References

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, CDC-Fact Sheet- Fast Facts-Smoking and Tobacco Use, available at https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/fact_sheets/fast_facts/index.htm. Accessed December 27, 2016.
2. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The Health Consequences of Smoking- 50 years of Progress: A Report of the Surgeon General, Atlanta: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, 2014. Accessed December 20, 2016.
3. American Lung Association. American Lung Association's 'Tobacco 21' Initiative to Save Lives of Millennials, Future Generations by Raising Tobacco Sales Age to 21, available at <http://www.lung.org/about-us/media/press-releases/tobacco-21-initiative-save-futures-lives>. Accessed December 27, 2016.
4. Taioli, E, Wydner, EL. Effect of the Age at which Smoking Begins on Frequency of Smoking in Adulthood. *New England Journal of Medicine* 1991; 325(13): 968-969.
5. US Department of Health and Human Services. Preventing Tobacco Use among Youth and Young Adults: A Report of the Surgeon General 2012, available at <http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/reports/preventing-youth-tobacco-use/#FullReport>. Accessed November 26, 2013.
6. Tobacco twenty-one. State by State Tobacco Laws, Taxes, and Statistics, available at <http://tobacco21.Org/state-by-state/>. Accessed December 21, 2016.
7. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Youth Risk Behavioral Surveillance System, 2015, available at <https://nccd.cdc.gov/youthonline/App/Default.aspx>. Accessed December 27, 2016.
8. Jefferson County Department of Health: Community Health Assessment for Jefferson County, Alabama. Birmingham, Alabama. 2014.
9. England, LJ, Bunnell, R, Pechacek, TF, Tong, VT. Nicotine and the Developing Human. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*: 49(2): 286-293, August 2015, available at [http://www.ajpmonline.org/article/S0749-3797\(15\)00035-5/fulltext](http://www.ajpmonline.org/article/S0749-3797(15)00035-5/fulltext). Accessed December 28, 2016.
10. DiFranza, JR. Which Interventions against the Sale of Tobacco to Minors can be expected to Reduce Smoking? *Tobacco Control* 2012; 21(4): 436-442.
11. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Three out of 4 American Adults Favor Making 21 the Minimum Age of Sale for Tobacco Products, available at <https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2015/p0707-tobacco-age.html>. Accessed December 27, 2016.
12. Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids. Increasing the Sale of Age for Tobacco Products to 21, available at https://www.tobaccofreekids.org/what_we_do/state_local/sales_21. Accessed on December 27, 2016.

13. Consumer Affairs. Widespread Support for Raising Minimum Age for Buying Tobacco, Survey Finds, available at www.consumeraffairs.com/news/widespread-support-for-raising-minimum-age-for-buying-tobacco-survey-finds-060216.html. Accessed on December 27, 2016.
14. King, BA, Jama, AO, Marynak, KL, and Promoff, GR: Attitudes toward Raising the Minimum Age of Sale for Tobacco among U.S. Adults. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* (2015), published by Elsevier. Accessed December 27, 2016.
15. American Lung Association. American Lung Association's 'Tobacco 21' Initiative to Save Lives of Millennials, Future Generations by Raising Tobacco Sales Age to 21, available at <http://www.lung.org/about-us/media/press-releases/tobacco-21-initiative-save-futures-lives>. Accessed December 27, 2016.
16. White, MM, et al., "Facilitating Adolescent Smoking: Who Provides the Cigarettes?" *American Journal of Health Promotion*, 19(5): 355-360, May/June 2005.
17. Institute of Medicine, *Public Health Implications of Raising the Minimum Age of Legal Access to Tobacco Products* (2015), available at <http://www.iom.edu/Activities/PublicHealth/TobaccoMinimumAge.aspx>. Accessed December 27, 2016.
18. Tobacco Control Legal Consortium. *Raising the Minimum Legal Sale Age for Tobacco and Related Products*. Available at www.publichealthlawcenter.org. Accessed December 27, 2016.
19. American Academy of Pediatrics. *The American Academy of Pediatrics Issues Sweeping Recommendations on Tobacco and E-Cigarettes*, available at <https://www.aap.org/en-us/aap-press-room/Pages/Tobacco-and-E-Cigarettes.aspx>. Accessed December 27, 2016.
20. Naplesnews.com. *The Doctor Is In: Major Benefit of Tobacco 21 laws in Postponing Access*, available at naplesnews.com/story/news/local/communities/collier-citizen/2016/08/24/doctor-major-benefit-tobacco-21-laws-postponin-access. Accessed December 27, 2016.
21. Morain, SR, Winickoff, JP and Mello, MM: *Have Tobacco 21 Laws Come of Age?* *New England Journal of Medicine* 2016; 374: 1601-1604.
22. Winickoff, JP, Hartman, L, Chem ML, Gottlieb, JD, Nabi-Burza, E., and DiFranza, JR: *Retail Impact of Raising Tobacco Sales Age to 21 Years*. *American Journal of Public Health*. Published on-line September 11, 2014. Accessed December 27, 2016.
23. MacLean, Jayson: *Raise the Minimum Age to Buy Cigarettes to 21, says Physician Group*, available at cantechletter.com/2016/10/raise-minimum-age-buy-cigarettes-21-says-physician-group. Accessed December 27, 2016.
24. Pierobon, JM: *Point of View: It is time for 21*, available at palmbeachpost.com/news/news/opinion/point-of-view-it-is-time-for-21/ns/HGS/. Accessed December 27, 2016.

25. Philofsky, H. and Crane, R.: California Age 21 for Nicotine/Tobacco: A Near-Term Fiscal Analysis Based on the Projected Reduction in Low Birth Weight and Premature Births. Preventing Tobacco Addiction Foundation. Accessed January 4, 2017.
26. William Spencer: Legal Age to Purchase Tobacco Products and E-Cigarettes Raised to 21, available at <http://thehuntingtonian.com/2014/03/19/legal-age-to-purchase-tobacco-products-and-e-cigarettes-raised-to-21>. Accessed January 4, 2017.
27. Ahmand, Sajjad: The Cost-Effectiveness of Raising the Legal Smoking Age in California. Medical Decision Making 2005; 330-340.