

2017 LEGISLATIVE SESSION AG REQUEST LEGISLATION

TOBACCO 21

In an effort to combat tobacco use and prevent youth nicotine addiction, raise the minimum age of sale for tobacco and vapor products to 21 years old in Washington.

PROBLEM

Tobacco use remains a leading cause of preventable death in Washington, contributing to 8,300 deaths annually and costing the state more than \$5 billion a year in healthcare costs and lost productivity.¹ Adolescence and early adulthood is the period during which smoking behaviors are typically developed.²

BACKGROUND

Raising the age of sale for tobacco products to 21 will make it harder for 15 to 17 year olds to access tobacco products, helping to protect them from addiction to a deadly product. According to the Institute of Medicine, raising the tobacco sale age will alter the peer group of high school students, who often access tobacco products through older individuals in their social networks.³ With the minimum legal sale age set at 21 instead of 18, legal purchasers would be less likely to be in the same social networks as high school students and therefore less accessible to sell or give cigarettes to them.

Over 200 municipalities nationwide have already raised the age of sale for tobacco products to 21, as well as the states of Hawaii and California.

LEGISLATION (SB 5025 - HB 1054)

This legislation raises the age of sale tobacco and vapor products in Washington state from 18 to 21. It does not impact sales on military installations, nor does it penalize youth possession.

Action today will save lives. Raising the national minimum age of sale for tobacco products to 21, over the long term, is projected to reduce adult smoking prevalence by 12% and reduce smoking-related deaths by nearly 10%.⁴ **Based on current smoking trends, that equates to 8,500 kids alive in Washington state today who will be saved from a premature death if this policy is passed.**

ENDORSED BY

- AirVan
- Alaska
- American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network
- American College of Cardiology, Washington Chapter
- American Heart Association
- American Stroke Association
- American Lung Association of the Mountain Pacific
- Bastyr University
- Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids
- Clallam County Health & Human Services
- Foundation for Healthy Generations
- Holland America Line
- King County
- Molina Healthcare
- North Coast Electric Company
- Northwest Health Law Advocates
- Preventing Tobacco Addiction Foundation
- Public Health Roundtable
- Regence
- Savers
- Southeast Seattle P.E.A.C.E. Coalition
- Snohomish Health District
- Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department
- Together! For Youth
- TrueBlue
- UW Medicine
- Virginia Mason
- Washington Association for Substance Abuse & Violence Prevention
- Washington Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics
- Washington State Association of Local Public Health Officials
- Washington State Board of Health
- Washington State Dental Association
- Washington State Hospital Association
- Washington State Medical Association
- Washington State Nurses Association
- Washington State PTA
- Washington State Public Health Association
- Whatcom County
- The YMCA



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1: Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids, "The Toll of Tobacco in Washington," http://www.tobaccofreekids.org/facts/issues/toll_us/washington

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, Office on Smoking and Health, 2014.

3: Institute of Medicine, Public Health Implications of Raising the Minimum Age of Legal Access to Tobacco Products, Washington, DC: The National Academies Press, 2015, <http://www.iom.edu/Reports/2015/TobaccoMinimumAgeReport.aspx>

4: Institute of Medicine, Public Health Implications of Raising the Minimum Age of Legal Access to Tobacco Products, Washington, DC: The National Academies Press, 2015, <http://www.iom.edu/Reports/2015/TobaccoMinimumAgeReport.aspx>