

Tobacco 21

The Tobacco 21 initiative calls on Pennsylvania to raise the minimum legal age of sale for all tobacco products from 18 to 21. Pennsylvania does not currently have Tobacco 21 legislation, leaving youth vulnerable to nicotine addiction and adverse health impacts. Currently, Act 112 of 2002 prohibits the sale of tobacco to minors under 18, however in Pennsylvania, youth access laws are preempted, meaning they cannot be stricter than or differ from the commonwealth law. Tobacco use is started and established during adolescence; nearly 90% of cigarette smokers first try smoking before the age of 18. Raising the minimum legal age of sale (MLA) to 21 will reduce tobacco use initiation by an estimated 25% in youth ages 15-17, according to the National Academy of Medicine. **A comprehensive Tobacco 21 law is necessary to protect current and future generations from a lifetime of tobacco related diseases and premature death.**

TOBACCO



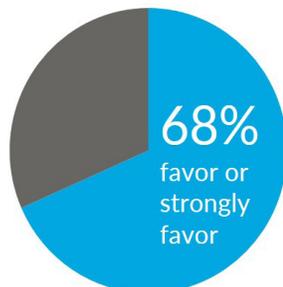
Reducing & Preventing Youth Tobacco Use

Program activities at the national, state, and local level have been shown to reduce and prevent youth tobacco use when implemented together:

-  Higher costs for tobacco products (e.g., increased taxes)
-  Anti-tobacco media messages targeted toward youth
-  Community policies & interventions supporting tobacco-free environments

Pennsylvanians Support Tobacco 21!

Over two thirds of Pennsylvania voters support raising the minimum legal age of sale for tobacco from 18 to 21.



There is bipartisan support: 72% of Democrats and 68% of Republicans favor raising the legal age of sale.

Support increases with age: While just over half of young adult voters support the change, over three quarters of 65+ voters do.

19%
of Pennsylvania high school students use tobacco, and **5,100** kids under 18 become new daily smokers each year.

244,000
kids under 18 in Pennsylvania will ultimately die prematurely from smoking if current rates don't change.

1 in 5
high school students in the U.S. are now using e-cigarettes, that is a **78%** increase since last year.



RECOMMENDATION: Increase the minimum legal age for the sale of all tobacco products, including e-cigarettes, to 21 years old to significantly reduce youth tobacco use and to prevent related disease and premature death among younger generations.

Sources:
Health Consequences of Smoking, 2014; Institute of Medicine of the National Academies, 2015; Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids, 2018; Tobacco Control in PA, 2017; Pennsylvania Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 2017. Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report, 2018.



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