



Tobacco 21 – Raising the Minimum Legal Sales Age to Prevent Youth Tobacco Use Initiation

Every year tobacco use COSTS Illinois nearly \$2 BILLION in Medicaid spending

Health Impact:

- March 2015, Institute of Medicine study estimates that Tobacco 21 would reduce smoking among 15-17 year olds by 25% and among 18-20 year olds by 15%
- Preventing smoking before age 18 means fewer long-term smokers, reducing the overall smoking rates by an estimated 12%
- Young people’s brains are particularly susceptible to nicotine addiction while they’re still maturing neurologically.
- **480,000 annual premature deaths in US are caused by tobacco use.** 18,300 in Illinois alone.
- **Tobacco use causes more premature deaths than AIDS, auto crashes, homicides, alcohol use, illegal drug use, suicides and fires COMBINED.**

Economic Consequences to Illinois:

- Annual health care **costs** in Illinois directly caused by **smoking** = **\$5.49 Billion**
- Portion covered by state **Medicaid** program = \$2 Billion
- **Illinois residents’ state & federal tax burden** from smoking-caused government expenditures = \$982 per household
- Smoking-caused **productivity losses** in Illinois = \$5.27 Billion
- **Each pack of cigarettes** consumed costs **our society** \$18.05 in increased health care and work related expenditures.

The primary cigarette source for underage smokers is their 18 to 20 year old peers.

- Increasing the legal age of sale would virtually eliminate the ability for high school students to purchase tobacco products and share those products with younger kids.

Why now?

- After a decade of consistent decreases in tobacco use by teenagers, the National Youth Tobacco Survey reports that in 2014 overall use of tobacco among youth rose, exposing dangerous new trends.
- Increased marketing by the tobacco industry of alternative products, such as small cigars, hookahs, and flavored e-cigarettes has put millions of young people at risk of lifelong deadly nicotine addiction.

National Support for Tobacco 21:

- **A July 2015 CDC study found 75% of U.S. adults, including 70% of current smokers support Tobacco 21.**

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Nationwide momentum: (As of July 2016)

- 170 cities in 13 states, plus the states of Hawaii and California have passed Tobacco 21 legislation.
- Locally: the City of Evanston, the City of Chicago and Oak Park already have a Tobacco 21 ordinance in place.

E-cigarettes:

- While youth cigarette smoking in our community and across the country is slowly declining, e-cigarette use among youth has more than doubled in recent years.
- The health consequences of the use of e-cigarettes and exposure to secondhand e-cigarette emissions are unknown. There is currently no scientific evidence establishing the safety of e-cigarettes.
- E-cigarette marketing mirrors strategies used by cigarette companies in the past, which they are no longer allowed to use because they appeal to youth.
- E-cigarettes produce an aerosol that has nicotine, harmful chemicals, and toxins known to cause cancer among other things.
- E-cigarettes are NOT approved by the US FDA to help people quit smoking. Scientific studies are mixed on whether e-cigarettes help people quit using tobacco and nicotine.

The argument: If you can go to war and bear arms at 18 you should have the right to smoke.

- The Department of Defense (DoD) has a goal for tobacco-free installations (bases, posts, etc.) by 2020. The joint military base in Hawaii is complying with the state Tobacco 21 law.
- The U.S. Army, the Department of the Navy and the Marine Corps have each announced their support of Hawaii's new law (source article here: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/hawaii-becomes-first-state-raise-smoking-age-to-21_us_568577d5e4b0b958f65ba00b)
- Legal age to purchase and consume alcohol on U.S. installations (bases, posts, etc.) is 21.

Other age restrictions:

- Illinois current law requires 21 years of age to buy alcohol, gamble in a casino, to obtain an Illinois Concealed Carry License. In addition, there are age restriction polices to rent cars and hotel rooms.

A similar strategy was highly successful in addressing alcohol related problems.

- A national age 21 law for alcohol sales resulted in reduced alcohol consumption among youth, decreased alcohol dependence and has led to a dramatic reduction in drunk driving fatalities.

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