

## **The Tobacco to 21 Act (S. 2100 in the 115<sup>th</sup> Congress)**

### **Save Lives by Raising the Tobacco Minimum Age to 21**

- The Tobacco to 21 Act would raise the minimum legal tobacco age of sale to 21 from the current minimum legal age of 18.
- Three-quarters of Americans favor raising the tobacco age of sale to 21 years, including seven in ten smokers.<sup>1</sup>
- The Institute of Medicine at the National Academy of Medicine<sup>2</sup> has concluded that raising the minimum legal age of sale of tobacco products nationwide would:
  - Result in 223,000 fewer premature deaths, 50,000 fewer deaths from lung cancer, and 4.2 million fewer years of life lost for those born between 2000 and 2019;
  - Reduce tobacco initiation (especially among youth 15-17 year olds); and
  - Lead to a 12 percent decrease in smoking prevalence.
- Ninety-five (95) percent of adult smokers begin smoking before they turn 21.
  - Data suggest that adolescents may have an increased biological vulnerability to the effects of nicotine and nicotine addiction.<sup>3</sup>
  - The likelihood of developing smoking-related cancers increases with duration of smoking; therefore, those users that start at younger ages and continue to smoke are at higher risk of tobacco-related disease and death.<sup>4</sup>
- As of September 15, 2017, at least 260 localities have already acted to raise the age to 21:
  - State of Hawaii (effective 1/1/16)
  - State of California (effective 6/9/16)
  - State of New Jersey (effective 11/1/17)
  - State of Oregon (effective 1/1/18)
  - State of Maine (effective 7/1/2018)
  - Arizona (2): Cottonwood, Douglas
  - Arkansas (1): Helena/West Helena
  - Colorado (1): Aspen
  - Illinois (10 counties)
  - Kansas (18 counties)
  - Massachusetts (153 counties)
  - Michigan (2): Ann Arbor, Genesee County
  - Minnesota (2): Edina, St. Louis Park
  - Mississippi (1): Adams County
  - Missouri (11 counties)
  - New York (16 counties)
  - Ohio (8 counties)
  - Rhode Island (2): Barrington, Central Falls
  - Washington, D.C.: (Pending congressional review)

### **Public Health Impacts of Tobacco**

- Tobacco use remains the leading cause of preventable death in the United States, responsible for approximately 500,000 premature deaths each year.<sup>5</sup>
- Tobacco use costs the United States approximately \$170 billion in direct medical costs and \$156 billion in lost productivity every year.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> American Journal of Preventive Medicine: [http://www.ajpmonline.org/article/S0749-3797\(15\)00252-4/pdf](http://www.ajpmonline.org/article/S0749-3797(15)00252-4/pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Institute of Medicine: <http://iom.nationalacademies.org/Reports/2015/TobaccoMinimumAgeReport.aspx>

<sup>3</sup> National Institutes of Health: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3543069/>

<sup>4</sup> National Institutes of Health: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK44701/>

<sup>5</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: [http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data\\_statistics/fact\\_sheets/fast\\_facts/](http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/fact_sheets/fast_facts/)

## Endorsements in the 115<sup>th</sup> Congress

- Academic Pediatric Association
- American Academy of Family Physicians
- American Academy of Pediatrics
- American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network
- American Heart Association
- American Lung Association
- American Pediatric Society
- American Public Health Association
- American Society of Clinical Oncology
- Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs
- Association of Medical School Pediatric Department Chairs
- Association of Schools and Programs of Public Health
- Association of State and Territorial Health Officials
- Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids
- First Focus Campaign for Children
- HMSA – Blue Cross Blue Shield Hawaii
- National Association of Chronic Disease Directors
- National Association of County and City Health Officials
- Pediatric Policy Council
- Society for Adolescent Health and Medicine
- Society for Pediatric Research
- Society for Public Health Education
- Trust for America's Health
- University of Hawaii Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy
- University of Hawaii John A. Burns School of Medicine
- University of Hawaii Myron B. Thompson School of Social Work/Department of Social Work
- University of Hawaii Office of Public Health Studies