TOBACCO21

“HEALTHY TOWNS, HEALTHY KIDS.”™
Cigarette sales to those under 21 account for only 2.12% of total sales. But, because 90% of smokers start by the age of 21, these are the very sales that help lead to 9 out of every 10 new smokers. This means that the impact on store owners will be minimal and will only affect a very small percentage of their tobacco sales in the short term.\(^1\)

**Raising the minimum tobacco sales age to 21 will dramatically reduce tobacco use.**


\(^2\)This is a conservative estimate. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. National Center for Health Statistics. National Health Interview Survey, 2008. Analysis by the American Lung Association, Research and Program Services Division using SPSS software.


\(^4\)Analysis of 2011 Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBS) data by Jonathan P Winickoff, MD, MPH, Associate Professor of Pediatrics, Harvard Medical School.


Nearly 90% of smokers started smoking by age 20.¹

Scientific study of the brain is increasingly showing a distinct gap between when we are physiologically mature and neurobiologically mature.²

In fact, there could be as much as a 4-7 year difference. During this period the brain continues to be highly vulnerable.²

The minimum age of military service does not equal readiness to enlist in a lifetime of smoking.

From neuroscience experiments, we know that the frontal lobe - the seat of human judgment - is not fully wired until age 25.³ This is why some describe the period from 18-25 years as emerging into adulthood.² During this critical period, the brain remains especially vulnerable to tobacco addiction.⁴

**Delaying the age of initiation of nicotine significantly prevents a lifetime of addiction.**

99% of lifetime smokers started smoking before the age of 26.²

Tobacco affects the development of the brain in areas of addiction during this vulnerable period.⁴,⁵

The tobacco industry knew all of this as early is 1986

“Raising the legal minimum age for cigarette purchaser to 21 could gut our key young adult market...”

-Philip Morris report, January 21, 1986⁶

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¹SAMHSA. Calculated based on the data in the 2011 National Survey on Drug Use and Health.


⁴Morales et al, Cigarette Exposure, Dependence & Craving are Related to Insula Thickness in Young Adult Smokers; Nature/Neuropsychopharmacology, 2014, pages 1-7


⁶Philip Morris Discussion Draft of Sociopolitical Strategy http://legacy.library.ucsf.edu/tid/aba84e00/pdf
Big tobacco (RJR and Philip Morris USA) have been working through the retailers.

The arguments you may hear:

**We will go out of business.**

When Needham increased the sales age to 21 in 2005 not a single convenience store went out of business.

Restaurant and bar owners had the same fear when smoking was banned, and this did not happen.\(^1\)

Tobacco sales to 18-20 year olds are only 2% of retail tobacco sales.\(^2\)

CVS and Target have decided to stop selling all tobacco products, leaving more tobacco business for convenience stores.

We make our profits from the ancillary purchases (milk and bread) when people come in to buy cigarettes.

98% of tobacco sales and all associated ancillary purchases will be unaffected.\(^2\)

18-20 year olds will have more money for other in-store purchases that are not tobacco.

They will just go to other towns and we will lose business.

Lower smoking rates are better for business.
A city or town that creates fewer smokers will have higher socioeconomic status, better health status, better jobs, and better quality of life for all residents.\(^3\)

Research has shown a minimal retail impact of raising the sales age to 21.\(^2\)
In fact, since 2005 in Needham, there is no evidence for youth traveling to other towns to purchase tobacco.

Each town that goes to 21 increases the likelihood that the surrounding towns will also go to 21.

Small decreases in youth access to retail tobacco are strongly associated with lower tobacco use.
The key point is that youth will quit or use less tobacco, and those who don’t smoke are less likely to start.\(^4,5\)

We want this to go to the state legislature to make it a level playing field.

The banning of tobacco in bars and restaurants was won on the local level first before it went to the state.

This is a ploy by the Tobacco Industry.
When Utah’s Senator Reid was asked why Tobacco21 didn’t pass at the state level, he explained it to us in three words: “The Tobacco Lobby.”

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What you can’t do until you are 21 years or older:

- **Buy alcohol**
  During the Vietnam era, 29 states lowered the alcohol purchase age to 18 and highway death rates made a significant climb. Raising the sales age back to 21 caused the death rate to drop significantly.¹

- **Casino gambling**

- **Get a ‘license to carry’ gun permit.**

- **Rent a car (must be age 25 - crash rates don’t drop significantly until then)**

- **Rent a hotel room in some hotels.**

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

**Response:** The minimum age of military service does not equal readiness to enlist in a lifetime of smoking.

**IN FACT:**

The U.S. Army Surgeon General says soldiers who smoke are less combat ready and take longer to heal.²

The U.S. Military is taking steps to ban all tobacco sales on military bases. Easy access to cigarettes has led to a 33.6% smoking rate among active duty military.²

Years of studies, including a comprehensive study on 9.3 million military beneficiaries, have revealed lung cancer mortality rates are double among Veterans.³

Veterans who served to protect our freedom but contracted emphysema from addiction to the discounted cigarettes in the military have lost their freedom.⁴

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³ [A Study of Cancer in the Military Beneficiary Population. Guarantor: Raymond Shelton Crawford III, MD MBA, Contributors: Raymond Shelton Crawford III, MD MBA; Julian Wu, MD MPH; Dae Park, MD; Galen Lane Barbour, MD; Military Medicine, Vol. 172, October 2007](http://www.iom.edu/~/media/Files/Report%20Files/2009/MilitarySmokingCessation/Combating%20Tobacco%20Military%20for%20web.pdf)