

Letter: Tobacco 21 bill crucial in preventing deaths

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To the editor

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Tobacco use still remains the No. 1 cause of preventable deaths in both the United States and New York state, according to the state [Department of Health](#) and the [U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#). Tobacco use is directly related to 16 different cancers, most notably lung cancer.

Albany County now joins a growing list of health-conscious cities, counties and states passing Tobacco 21 legislation. This concerted effort directly addresses a 2012 report from the [U.S. Surgeon General](#) that 96 percent of smokers started using tobacco before age 21.

According to the latest New York State Behavioral Risk Surveillance System Report, 13 percent of Albany County youth are current smokers. This figure does not include chewing tobacco, hookahs or e-cigarettes. With the passing of Tobacco 21, we hope these numbers will decrease significantly over the next several years.

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