

Tobacco 21 signed in as Nassau County law

theislandnow.com/featured/tobacco-21-signed-in-as-nassau-county-law

Rebecca Klar

June 6, 2018



Nassau County legislators joined County Executive Laura Curran as she signed Tobacco 21 in as county law. (Photo courtesy of Nassau County)

Nassau County's legal age to purchase tobacco is officially 21.

On Monday, Nassau County Executive Laura Curran (D-Baldwin) signed into law a bill raising the age from 18 after the Legislature unanimously approved it in May.

The bill was introduced by the Republican majority, but followed years of GOP opposition to the age increase bill introduced by members of the Democratic minority.

Legislator Arnold Drucker (D-Plainview) said in a news release that he was proud to witness this historic day in Nassau.

Drucker's predecessor, the late Legislator Judy Jacobs, had been a big proponent of increasing the age and was the first to propose the law.

"Raising the minimum age for the purchase of tobacco products to 21 will save lives by making it harder for teenagers to pick up a dangerous habit that results in a lifetime of poor health, addiction, inordinate expense, and a loss of the ability to enjoy life to its fullest," Drucker said.

Presiding Officer Richard Nicoletto (R-New Hyde Park) said in a previous interview that some opposition from his colleagues had stemmed from feeling that 19- and 20-year-olds are old enough to make the decision themselves.

However, an increase in young people using e-cigarettes created a “new urgency” for the bill, Nicoletto said.

The law will fine stores for selling tobacco products, including cigarettes, cigars, chewing tobacco, herbal cigarettes, rolling papers and electronic cigarettes, to underage customers.

It will mainly affect Oyster Bay, as the 21 age requirement is already a town law in North Hempstead and Hempstead.