



**Public Health Committee  
Tuesday, March 20, 2018**

**Senate Bill 164 AA Raising the Legal Age to Purchase Tobacco to Twenty-One  
Andrea Boissevain, Chair, Get Healthy CT Steering Committee  
Get Healthy CT**

On behalf of Get Healthy CT, I would like to thank the Public Health committee leadership and members for providing us with the opportunity to comment in support of SB 164, AA Raising the Legal Age for Purchase and Use of Tobacco Products, on behalf of the American Heart Association.

Get Healthy CT is a coalition dedicated to preventing and reducing obesity and chronic disease by educating the community and providing resources for smoking cessation, healthy eating and physical activity. Founded in 2010, our community-wide coalition aims to "make the healthy choice the easy choice." We use our website as a mechanism to educate the community on the importance of healthy eating and physical activity and by collaborating with our partners to develop community programs to help people avoid tobacco, eat healthier and increase their physical activity.

Our dedicated volunteer membership represents hundreds of local health and community organizations in the Greater Bridgeport, Greenwich and New Haven regions. Our current 3-year goals are focused on increasing access to healthy foods and beverages, increasing access to free and low-cost physical activity opportunities and educating our communities about the dangers of tobacco products. These three behavior choices; eating, physical activity and tobacco-use are the top three modifiable risk factors for most chronic diseases. By changing what we eat, drink, how much we move and choosing not to smoke can help reduce our risk of major disease.

A particular concern of our coalition is the use of tobacco products in young adults. According to the US Department of Health and Human Services, eighty percent of youth smokers will become adult smokers and one-half of adult smokers will die prematurely from tobacco-related diseases. These are many of the same chronic diseases that our coalition is working tirelessly to try to reduce in our communities.

To help us to begin to make a larger impact on the health of Connecticut residents, our coalition fully supports increasing the purchase of all tobacco products to age 21. With this legislation we can begin to reduce the incidence of many chronic diseases that are plaguing our communities and help our youngest residents live a long and healthier life. We respectfully request your support for this important bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Andrea Boissevain", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Andrea Boissevain  
Chair, Get Healthy CT Steering Committee  
468 Birdseye Street, Stratford, CT 06615