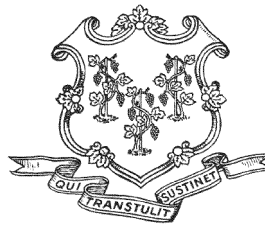


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March 4, 2019

Good morning Senator Abrams, and Representative Steinberg. I would like to express my support for HB 7200, AN ACT PROHIBITING THE SALE OF CIGARETTES, TOBACCO PRODUCTS, ELECTRONIC NICOTINE DELIVERY SYSTEMS AND VAPOR PRODUCTS TO PERSONS UNDER AGE TWENTY-ONE. This legislation would increase the legal minimum age to purchase tobacco products and certain delivery systems in Connecticut from 18 to 21.

In previous years I have proposed legislation that would increase the age for the legal purchase of tobacco to 21. It has become clear that with the increasing use of e-cigarettes and vaping products by Connecticut youth that the legislation should address those issues as well. It is especially disturbing that some manufacturers appear to be marketing vaping products specifically to children and youth by offering flavored products.

Tobacco use has an adverse effect on health and quality of life for smokers and other tobacco users; it is also well known that these products are addictive. The best policy for supporting good health and quality of life is to prevent people from starting the use of tobacco. Raising the legal age for the purchase of these products can delay and perhaps prevent Connecticut residents from starting tobacco use. According to a National Academy of Science report, raising the minimum legal age for purchase of tobacco products will lead to substantial reductions in tobacco use which will save lives and improve the health of Americans across the lifespan<sup>1</sup>.

As of March, 2018, five states – California, New Jersey, Oregon, Hawaii and Maine – have raised the legal age to purchase tobacco to 21; In addition nearly 300 localities, including New York City, Chicago, and Boston<sup>2</sup> have raised the age. Early evidence indicates that the law in California is effective at preventing merchants from selling tobacco products to residents who have not reached age 21<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK31041> <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK310412/>

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.tobaccofreekids.org/assets/content/what\\_we\\_do/state\\_local\\_issues/sales\\_21/states\\_localities\\_MLSA\\_2\\_1.pdf](https://www.tobaccofreekids.org/assets/content/what_we_do/state_local_issues/sales_21/states_localities_MLSA_2_1.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> <http://tobaccocontrol.bmj.com/content/early/2018/02/05/tobaccocontrol-2017-054088>  
<https://tobacco21.org/category/2018-news/>

The use of e-cigarettes and vaping products among young people has reached epidemic proportions. From 2011 to 2018 the use of e-cigarettes by high school students has increased 78%.<sup>4</sup> In light of this, the FDA<sup>5</sup> has placed limits on the sale of flavored vaping products<sup>6</sup> for those under 18.. Connecticut should go further and move the age to 21. Raising the legal age to purchase tobacco products and delivery systems to 21 would be good policy for our state. Thank you for hearing this important bill.

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[https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/67/wr/mm6745a5.htm?s\\_cid=mm6745a5\\_w](https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/67/wr/mm6745a5.htm?s_cid=mm6745a5_w)

<sup>4</sup> [https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/67/wr/mm6745a5.htm?s\\_cid=mm6745a5\\_w](https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/67/wr/mm6745a5.htm?s_cid=mm6745a5_w)

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.nbcnews.com/health/health-news/fda-restricts-all-flavored-e-cigarettes-moves-ban-menthol-n936471>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.fda.gov/ForConsumers/ConsumerUpdates/ucm506676.htm>