

Michigan Tobacco 21 Talking Points

- **Tobacco use is a major concern in Michigan** – Tobacco use remains the leading cause of disease and death in the state of Michigan. It kills about 16,200 Michiganders every year.¹
- **Tobacco 21 saves lives** - Michigan researchers have estimated that if Tobacco 21 (raising the minimum legal sales age for tobacco products to 21 years) had been enacted in 2019, 11,000 fewer young Michiganders would have started smoking.¹ They also estimated that 17,000 deaths in Michigan would be averted by the year 2100.
- **Michigan Tobacco 21 would prevent retailer confusion** - Aligning state law with federal law will prevent confusion among tobacco retailers. For example, Michigan law still requires tobacco retailers to post a sign saying the minimum age is 18.²
- **A state law would provide enforcement authority.** - A state Tobacco 21 law will give state and local law Tobacco 21 enforcement authority, which can help prevent illegal sales to individual under 21 by tobacco retailers. This will help prevent youth access to tobacco products.
- **Michigan is lagging behind other states**– A majority of states have already passed Tobacco 21 laws. This includes most states near Michigan, including Indiana, Illinois, Ohio, Pennsylvania.³
- **There is public support for Tobacco 21** – Researchers found that nearly 60% of young people surveyed supported the adoption of a Tobacco 21 policy, and 3 in 5 supported Tobacco 21 because they were concerned about the health effects of tobacco.¹ According to a poll conducted by EPIC-MRA, 65% of Michigan adults are in favor of raising the legal minimum age for the sale of cigarettes and other tobacco products, including e-cigarettes, from 18 to 21.
- **Teen smoking can lead to long-term addiction** – National data show that 95% of adults begin smoking before age 21, and 4 out of 5 become regular, daily smokers before 21.⁴ Delaying the age at which youth first experiment with tobacco reduces the chance that they would transition to regular tobacco users.
- **Adolescents are more likely to obtain tobacco products from social sources.** Raising the legal sales age to 21 would reduce the likelihood that young people would have access to tobacco products by keeping it out of the social circles of those in the K-12 school environment.⁴
- **Tobacco 21 aligns tobacco and alcohol laws** - Raising the sales age for tobacco products, which is aligned with the minimum age of legal access to alcohol, is a common-sense public health policy that will simplify identification checks for retailers, who often sell tobacco and alcohol.
- **Tobacco 21 would reduce health care costs** - Smoking caused health costs in Michigan total more than \$4.59 billion per year, including more than \$1.36 billion in Medicaid costs.⁵ Raising the sales age to 21 would likely reduce future tobacco-related health care costs.

¹ Institute for Healthcare Policy & Innovation. "Tobacco 21 in Michigan: New Evidence and Policy Considerations. Available at: https://ihpi.umich.edu/sites/default/files/2019-03/Tobacco21-brief_FINAL_0.pdf

² *Michigan Compiled Laws* 722.641

³ Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids. "States and Localities that Have Raised the Minimum Legal Sale Age for Tobacco Products to 21." Available at:

https://www.tobaccofreekids.org/assets/content/what_we_do/state_local_issues/sales_21/states_localities_MLSA_21.pdf

⁴ Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids. "Raising the Tobacco Age to 21." Accessed June 16, 2021. Available at:

<https://www.tobaccofreekids.org/what-we-do/us/sale-age-21>

⁵ Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids. "The Toll of Tobacco in Michigan." Accessed June 16, 2021. Available at:

<https://www.tobaccofreekids.org/problem/toll-us/michigan>