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## Bureau of Tobacco Free Florida's Statement Regarding Increased Age to Purchase Tobacco and Electronic Cigarette Products



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**TALLAHASSEE, FLA.** – On Dec. 20, President Donald Trump signed a new law raising the minimum age to purchase tobacco and electronic cigarette products to 21 years old. This announcement comes in support of an effort to prevent youth tobacco initiation and curb the nationwide youth e-cigarette epidemic.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), national, state and local program activities have been shown to reduce and prevent youth tobacco use when implemented together – including raising the minimum age to 21 years old.<sup>1</sup> Studies have found that increasing the tobacco age will significantly reduce the number of adolescents and young adults who start smoking, reduce smoking-related deaths and immediately improve the health of teens and young adults.<sup>2</sup>

“Increasing the age to purchase tobacco and e-cigarette products to 21 is an important step to preventing youth tobacco use, but we must remain vigilant,” said Bureau Chief of Tobacco Free Florida, Laura Corbin. “As new types of nicotine devices enter the marketplace, we must continue our youth prevention efforts because we know that nearly nine out of 10 smokers start by age 18.”<sup>3</sup>

Florida has always been at the forefront of youth tobacco prevention and has seen steady declines in youth cigarette smoking. Florida created the model for strong tobacco control programs, contributing to the steady youth cigarette use decline to an important record low. In fact, Florida’s current high school cigarette smoking rate is the lowest it has ever been in the state at 2.1%.<sup>4</sup>

Tobacco control marketing programs are vital to combat the influential tactics from tobacco companies,<sup>5</sup> especially with the rise of e-cigarettes. Teen e-cigarette use threatens to reverse the declines we are seeing in high school cigarette smoking rates. E-cigarette companies use the same tricks tobacco companies used to target and recruit young smokers.<sup>6</sup> The brain continues to develop until about age 25.<sup>7</sup> And, using nicotine in adolescence can harm the parts of the brain that control attention, learning, mood, and impulse control.<sup>8</sup> Evidence suggests that teens who use e-cigarettes may be at greater risk of starting to smoke regular cigarettes.<sup>9,10,11,12</sup> The bottom line is that vaping is unsafe for kids, teens, and young adults.<sup>13</sup>

According to CDC, flavors are a top reason youth report using e-cigarettes.<sup>14</sup> The majority of youth e-cigarette users report using flavored varieties and most youth e-cigarette users first start using e-cigarettes with a flavored variety.<sup>15</sup> Not only does the liquid in e-cigarettes come in

flavors that appeal to young people,<sup>16</sup> it typically contains nicotine, which is highly addictive.<sup>17</sup> Scientists are still learning about the long-term health effects of e-cigarettes and their flavorings.<sup>18</sup>

Restricting youth access to all tobacco products, including e-cigarettes, and tobacco products that include flavors, is critical to reducing youth tobacco use and initiation. For more information, please visit [tobaccofreeflorida.com](http://tobaccofreeflorida.com).

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## About Tobacco Free Florida

The Florida Department of Health's Tobacco Free Florida campaign is a statewide cessation and prevention campaign funded by Florida's tobacco settlement fund. Since the program began in 2007, more than 234,000 Floridians have successfully quit using one of Tobacco Free Florida's free tools and services. There are now approximately 451,000 fewer adult smokers in Florida than there was 10 years ago, and the state has saved \$17.7 billion in health care costs.<sup>19</sup> To learn more about Tobacco Free Florida's Quit Your Way services, visit [www.tobaccofreeflorida.com](http://www.tobaccofreeflorida.com) or follow the campaign on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/TobaccoFreeFlorida](https://www.facebook.com/TobaccoFreeFlorida) or on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/tobaccofreefla](https://www.twitter.com/tobaccofreefla).

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<sup>1</sup> King BA, Jama AO, Marynak KL, Promoff GR. [Attitudes Toward Raising the Minimum Age of Sale for Tobacco Among U.S. Adults](#)External. American Journal of Preventive Medicine 2015;49(4):583-8 [accessed 2019 Sept 06].

<sup>2</sup> Institute of Medicine. 2015. Public Health Implications of Raising the Minimum Age of Legal Access to Tobacco Products. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. <https://doi.org/10.17226/18997>.

<sup>3</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The Health Consequences of Smoking —50 Years of Progress: A Report of the Surgeon General. Atlanta, GA: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, 2014

<sup>4</sup> Florida Youth Tobacco Survey (FYTS), Florida Department of Health, Bureau of Epidemiology, 2019.

<sup>5</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Designing and Implementing an Effective Tobacco Counter-Marketing Campaign. Atlanta, Georgia: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, First Edition October 2003.

<sup>6</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. E-Cigarette Use Among Youth and Young Adults: A Report of the Surgeon General—Executive Summary. Atlanta, GA: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, 2016.

<sup>7</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. E-Cigarette Use Among Youth and Young Adults. A Report of the Surgeon General. Atlanta, GA: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, 2016

<sup>8</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. E-Cigarette Use Among Youth and Young Adults. A Report of the Surgeon General. Atlanta, GA: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, 2016

<sup>9</sup> Berry KM, Fetterman JL, Benjamin EJ, et al. Association of Electronic Cigarette Use With Subsequent Initiation of Tobacco Cigarettes in US Youths. *JAMA Netw Open*. 2019;2(2):e187794. doi:10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2018.7794

<sup>10</sup> Miech R, Patrick ME, O'Malley PM, et al E-cigarette use as a predictor of cigarette smoking: results from a 1-year follow-up of a national sample of 12th grade students *Tobacco Control* 2017;26:e106-e111.

<sup>11</sup> National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. 2018. Public Health Consequences of E-Cigarettes. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. <https://doi.org/10.17226/24952>.

<sup>12</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. E-Cigarette Use Among Youth and Young Adults. A Report of the Surgeon General. Atlanta, GA: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, 2016.

<sup>13</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). "Quick Facts on the Risks of E-cigarettes for Kids, Teens, and Young Adults." CDC Office on Smoking and Health, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. 3 Dec 2018. [www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic\\_information/e-cigarettes/Quick-Facts-on-the-Risks-of-E-cigarettes-for-Kids-Teens-and-Young-Adults.html](http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic_information/e-cigarettes/Quick-Facts-on-the-Risks-of-E-cigarettes-for-Kids-Teens-and-Young-Adults.html) (Accessed 27 Aug 2019)

<sup>14</sup> Wang TW, Gentzke AS, Creamer MR, et al. Tobacco Product Use and Associated Factors Among Middle and High School Students — United States, 2019. *MMWR Surveill Summ* 2019;68(No. SS-12):1–22. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.ss6812a1>

<sup>15</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). "Quick Facts on the Risks of E-cigarettes for Kids, Teens, and Young Adults." CDC Office on Smoking and Health, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. 3 Dec 2018. [www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic\\_information/e-cigarettes/Quick-Facts-on-the-Risks-of-E-cigarettes-for-Kids-Teens-and-Young-Adults.html](http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic_information/e-cigarettes/Quick-Facts-on-the-Risks-of-E-cigarettes-for-Kids-Teens-and-Young-Adults.html) (Accessed 5 Dec 2019)

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<sup>16</sup> Cullen KA, Ambrose BK, Gentzke AS, Apelberg BJ, Jamal A, King BA. Notes from the Field: Use of Electronic Cigarettes and Any Tobacco Product Among Middle and High School Students — United States, 2011–2018. *MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep* 2018;67:1276–1277. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm6745a5>

<sup>17</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. E-Cigarette Use Among Youth and Young Adults. A Report of the Surgeon General. Atlanta, GA: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, 2016.

<sup>18</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). "Quick Facts on the Risks of E-cigarettes for Kids, Teens, and Young Adults." CDC Office on Smoking and Health, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. 3 Dec 2018. [www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic\\_information/e-cigarettes/Quick-Facts-on-the-Risks-of-E-cigarettes-for-Kids-Teens-and-Young-Adults.html](http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic_information/e-cigarettes/Quick-Facts-on-the-Risks-of-E-cigarettes-for-Kids-Teens-and-Young-Adults.html) (Accessed 27 Aug 2019)

<sup>19</sup> Mann, Nathan M, Nonnemaker, James M., Thompson, Jesse. "Smoking-Attributable Health Care Costs in Florida and Potential Health Care Cost Savings Associated with Reductions in Adult Smoking Prevalence." 2016.