

WOMEN'S STATE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL OF UTAH

SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH

RESOLUTION IN OPPOSITION TO H.B. 157 AGE LIMIT FOR TOBACCO AND RELATED PRODUCTS

Whereas, Smoking is recognized as extremely harmful, with detrimental impacts to: the health, quality of life, and life expectancy of smokers directly from smoking; the health, quality of life, and life-expectancy of nonsmokers and children from consumption of secondary smoke;¹ and tax and insurance rates from increased healthcare costs;

Whereas, Laws are necessary to protect nonsmokers and children from these detrimental impacts and to encourage a reduction in smoking to prevent further impacts;

Whereas, Existing laws are already in place to protect nonsmokers and children from detrimental impacts, such as prohibitions on smoking in public places and in cars with children;²

Whereas, Nearly 90% of adult smokers started smoking before age 18 and 99% of adult smokers started smoking before age 26;³

Whereas, The current Utah smoking age is 19;⁴

Whereas, The Utah smoking age is already higher than the smoking age in 47 states (age 18), the same as three other states (age 19), and lower than the smoking age in only one state (age 21);⁵

Whereas, The Utah smoking age is already one year higher than the age of adulthood, which is 18 in Utah and 18 or 19 in most states, thus helping reduce the age of smoking onset;⁶

Whereas, An increase in the smoking age to 21 would only address a small portion of the less than 9% adult smokers that started smoking between ages 18-26--those within that group that are between ages 19-21;

Whereas, An increase in the smoking age to 21 would decrease tobacco and related product sales which could reduce tax revenue to the state by over \$2,000,000 and tax revenue to local governments of over \$150,000;⁷

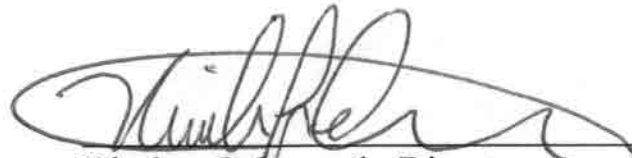
Whereas, A person is considered an adult in Utah at age 18,⁸ and at that time are considered capable of making life-altering decisions on issues such as voting⁸ and military enlistment;⁹ and

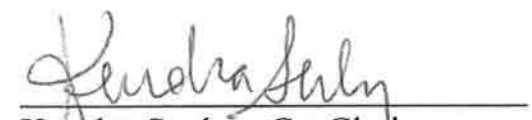
Whereas, Increasing the smoking age to 21 increases rather than limits the involvement of government in personal lives; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Women's State Legislative Council of Utah urges the Utah State Legislature to reject an increase to the smoking age and maintain the current smoking age of 19, one year higher than national averages.

Dated this 24th day of February 2016


Shauna Scott-Bellacomo, President
Women's State Legislative Council of Utah


Kimber Gabryszak, Director
Energy and Natural Resources
Legislative Study Committee


Kendra Seeley, Co-Chair
Energy and Natural Resources
Legislative Study Committee

Footnotes: 1 - World Health Organization (<http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs339/en/>)
2 - Utah State Code (le.utah.gov, Sections 78B-6-1105, 26-15-11, 41-6a-1717, and Title 26-38)
3 - CDC Fact Sheet (http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/fact_sheets/youth_data/tobacco_use/)
4 - Utah State Code (le.utah.gov, Section 76-10-104)
5 - CDC Press Release (<http://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2015/p0707-tobacco-age.html>)
6 - National Conference of State Legislatures (www.ncsl.org/research/human-services/termination-of-child-support-age-of-majority.aspx)
7 - Fiscal Note for H.B. 157 (<http://le.utah.gov/~2016/bills/static/HB0157.html>)
8 - 26th Amendment to the Constitution of the United States adopted in 1971 (http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/constitution_amendments_11-27.html#26)
9 - Military Eligibility (<http://todaysmilitary.com/joining/entrance-requirements>)