

IRON COUNTY RESOLUTION # 2977 - 2019

Introduced By: Health Department

Intent: Support Requiring Minimum Legal Sale Age (MLSA) which prohibits retailers from selling tobacco products to anyone under the age of 21 to Protect the Health of Youth

WHEREAS, tobacco use is the foremost preventable cause of premature death in the United States, responsible for approximately 480,000 deaths in a year and 20.8 million premature deaths in the U.S. over the past 50 years since the first Surgeon General's report on smoking in 1964.

WHEREAS, the annual economic impact of smoking in the U.S. is more than \$300 billion in health care and lost worker productivity costs;

WHEREAS, national data show that about 95 percent of adult smokers begin smoking before they turn 21, and that the ages of 18 to 21 are a critical period when many smokers move from experimental smoking to regular, daily use;

WHEREAS, the developing brains of young people are particularly susceptible to the addictive properties of nicotine, and as a result, approximately 3 out of 4 teen smokers end up smoking into adulthood.

WHEREAS, electronic smoking device use among minors has recently tripled;

WHEREAS, a 2015 Institute of Medicine report concludes that raising the minimum legal sales age for tobacco initiation particularly among adolescents aged 15 to 17, and that it will improve health across the lifespan and save lives; and that raising the minimum legal sales age for tobacco products to 21 nationwide would, over time, lead to a 12 percent decrease in smoking prevalence;

WHEREAS, the Institute of Medicine also predicts that raising the minimum legal sales age for tobacco products to 21 nationwide would result in 223,000 fewer premature deaths, 50,000 fewer deaths from lung cancer, and 4.2 million fewer years of life lost for those born between 2000 and 2019, and that it would result in near immediate reductions in preterm birth, low birth weight, and sudden infant death syndrome;

WHEREAS, a growing number of communities have enacted laws mandating a minimum legal sales age for tobacco products to 21, including eighteen states along with Washington DC and at least 480 localities;

WHEREAS, three-quarters of U.S. adults favor raising the MLSA for tobacco products to 21, including seven in ten smokers;

WHEREAS, the retail impact of ordinances mandating a minimum legal sales age of 21 for tobacco products is expected to be minimal in the first years of the policy because it works by

reducing or delaying initiation of smoking, especially among younger populations:

WHEREAS, raising the legal drinking age to 21 led to reduced alcohol use and dependence among youth, and contributed to a decline in drunk driving fatalities;

WHEREAS, states that have passed Tobacco 21 law have found a decline in adolescent tobacco youth use. Youth frequently rely on getting cigarettes from the 18-20 year olds in their social circles. Raising the MLSA reduces access to legal buyers in their daily routine (especially at school) and limits store purchases.


NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Iron County Board of Supervisors does hereby request that the state of Wisconsin increase the minimum legal sale age (MLSA) of all tobacco products to 21 to protect the health of youth.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be sent to Governor Tony Evers, Department of Health Services Secretary Andrea Palm, Department of Health Services Secretary Julie Willems Van Dijk, Senator Janet Bewley, Representative Beth Meyers, and the Wisconsin Counties Association.

**ADOPTED BY THE COUNTY BOARD OF IRON COUNTY THIS 24th DAY OF
SEPTEMBER 2019**



Michael Saari, COUNTY CLERK



Joseph Pinardi, COUNTY BOARD CHAIRPERSON