



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Andrea Stewart-Cousins

## Senate Majority Raises Age To Purchase Tobacco Products

ANDREA STEWART-COUSINS April 1, 2019

| ISSUE: **TOBACCO**

Albany, NY- The Senate Democratic Majority today passed legislation (S.2833) that will save lives by increasing the legal age to purchase tobacco products from 18 to 21. The Senate Majority joins the State Assembly in passing this legislation that will reduce the use of tobacco among New York's youth. This makes New York the eighth state to raise the tobacco age to 21.

"Tobacco products are highly addictive and are marketed at our kids," Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins said. "The legislation passed by the Senate Majority will help save lives and ensure fewer New Yorkers take up this dangerous and deadly habit. I commend bill sponsor Senator Diane Savino for her leadership on this issue."

Bill Sponsor, Senator Diane Savino said, "It should be our goal to end smoking entirely, and this step we are taking today is one in that direction. Young people are less likely to pick up smoking the later in life they have the opportunity to do so. By raising the age to buy tobacco and vape products to 21, we will help prevent future generations of young people from ever picking up a pack of cigarettes. I'm proud to have sponsored this bill and to see New York take charge on this issue."

According to the American Lung Association, as much as 60% of underage smokers obtain cigarettes from older friends who smoke. Studies have shown that 95% of all adult smokers began smoking before they turn 21. Smokers aged 18 to 19 years old are a major supplier for younger kids who rely on social resources to buy their tobacco products. The National Academy of Medicine study found that by increasing the tobacco age to 21 that the number of adolescents and young adults who start smoking will decrease.

The legislation passed by the Senate Majority includes:

- Increasing the age to purchase tobacco products, including electronic cigarettes, from 18 to 21.
- Requiring warning and notice signs currently displayed at retailers to reflect the new minimum age limit.
- Prohibiting the distribution of “free of charge” tobacco products to any persons under the age of 21.
- Clarifies that the retailer fines for selling tobacco products to a minor (Up to \$2,500 or possible loss of certificate) now applies to selling to those under the age of 21.

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#### RELATED LEGISLATION

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## 2019-S2833

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- Introduced
  - - In Committee Assembly
    - In Committee Senate
  - - On Floor Calendar Assembly
    - On Floor Calendar Senate
  - - Passed Assembly
    - Passed Senate
  - Delivered to Governor
  - Signed By Governor

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Increases the age to purchase tobacco products from 18 years old to 21 years old

January 29, 2019

Senate Floor Calendar

Sponsored by **Diane J. Savino**

Do you support this bill?