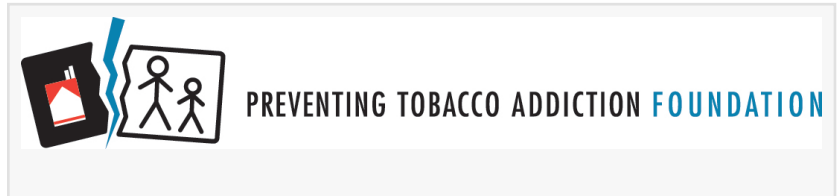


Preventing Tobacco Addiction Foundation Evaluates Statewide Tobacco 21 Laws

Finds That Most States Lack Adequate Enforcement



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Through comprehensive evaluations of 33 statewide Tobacco 21 laws, the Preventing Tobacco Addiction Foundation (PTAF) concluded there is much more to be done to protect kids from the harms of tobacco use and nicotine addiction.

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Rob Crane, MD

Using a best practice from the [Tobacco 21 Model Policy](#) as a guide, PTAF evaluated and issued grades for all statewide Tobacco 21 laws in multiple areas including enforcement, licensing, penalty structures, and whether a state allows or preempts local enactment of tobacco control laws. The Tobacco 21 Model Policy is an evidence-based framework developed by a consortium of public health organizations.

Statement of Rob Crane, MD, President of the Preventing Tobacco Addiction Foundation: “Because of slickly marketed, highly flavored nicotine e-cigarette products, we

face what the U.S. Surgeon General calls an [“epidemic”](#) of teen vaping and addiction. Early nicotine use through e-cigarettes quadruples the chance of progression to cigarette smoking and puts kids at risk of increased anxiety, depression and substance abuse. Tobacco 21 works when it’s rigorously enforced. These grades indicate most states lack adequate enforcement and are therefore failing to protect kids.”

For more than two decades, the Preventing Tobacco Addiction Foundation and its advocacy arm, Tobacco 21, have worked to raise the legal sales age for tobacco and nicotine products to 21. Tobacco 21 has broad public support from smokers and non-smokers alike and has been endorsed by every national public health organization, including the American Cancer Society, the American Heart Association, the American Lung Association, the American Public Health Association, and the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids.

Recognizing the ongoing public health crisis of teen e-cigarette use and the protective effect of raising the sales age, Congress passed-- and President Trump signed --the federal Tobacco 21 bill in December of 2019. To date, 33 states and 2 territories have enacted a Tobacco 21 law, but 17 states have yet to raise their age. Even though Tobacco 21 is now the 'law of the land,' states are charged with enforcement of public health laws. PTAF hopes these evaluations will encourage state and local health departments, public health advocates, and legislators to continue the fight to protect kids from the devastating effects of nicotine addiction and tobacco use.

Evaluations of each state Tobacco 21 law can be found at <https://tobacco21.org/state-grades/>.

Preventing Tobacco Addiction Foundation Mission: To reduce the terrible toll of smoking through education, advocacy, and policy change. Established in 1996, the Preventing Tobacco Addiction Foundation and its advocacy arm, Tobacco 21, work nationwide to advance strong tobacco control legislation that prevents youth initiation and addiction to tobacco and nicotine.

Amanda Swenson Turner
Preventing Tobacco Addiction Foundation
+1 614-766-2211
amanda.turner@PTAF.org

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