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American Academy of Pediatrics



DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN™  
Maryland Chapter

TO: The Honorable Delores G. Kelley, Chair  
Members, Senate Finance Committee

FROM: Richard A. Tabuteau  
Pamela Metz Kasemeyer  
J. Steven Wise  
Danna L. Kauffman

DATE: February 28, 2019

RE: **SUPPORT** – Senate Bill 895 – *Business Regulation – Tobacco Products and Electronic Smoking Devices – Revisions*

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On behalf of the Maryland State Medical Society and the Maryland Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, we submit this letter of **support** for Senate Bill 895, which increases the age for purchasing tobacco products and electronic smoking devices to 21 years of age.

It is well recognized that the vast majority of smokers begin using tobacco in their youth. Raising the minimum age required to purchase tobacco products and setting standards for the advertising and marketing of e-cigarettes will further limit access to tobacco with the goal of decreasing the prevalence of tobacco use among young people who may start smoking at a time when their behaviors and choices are not well-informed and/or they have not considered the long-term consequences.

According to the thirty-second Surgeon General's report, *The Health Consequences of Smoking – 50 Years of Progress*, smoking rates among teens and adults are less than half of what they were in 1964. However, 42-million American adults and 3-million middle and high school students continue to smoke. Further, even though smokers consume fewer cigarettes than 50-years ago, changes in the design and composition of cigarettes put smokers at a higher risk of developing lung cancer. The Surgeon General estimates that the economic costs attributable to smoking and exposure to tobacco smoke from both direct medical costs and lost productivity approach \$300 billion annually.

Passage of Senate Bill 895 will help prevent young people from becoming smokers and reflects Maryland's historical commitment to reducing tobacco use and the associated health consequences. A favorable report is requested.

**For more information call:**

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