



DATE: August 10, 2016

TO: Washington State Board of Health Members

FROM: Keith Grellner
Chair

SUBJECT: RESOLUTION 2016-01 TOBACCO TO 21

Background and Summary:

The Washington State Board of Health has supported efforts to reduce tobacco usage among adults and youths for decades. During the 2015 legislative session, The Washington State Attorney General, Bob Ferguson requested legislation that would raise the age at which a person could purchase and possess cigarettes, tobacco, products and vapor products to 21. The Board supported this legislation throughout the 2015 and 2016 legislative sessions, however it failed to pass.

The Board completed a Health Impact Review on the substitute version of the bill in October 2015. The review found:

- A fair amount of evidence that changing the minimum age for purchase and possession of tobacco and vapor products from 18 years to 21 years of age will decrease use of tobacco and vapor products among youth and young adults.
- Very strong evidence that decreasing use of tobacco and vapor products among youth and young adults will improve health outcomes.
- Unclear evidence for the bill's impacts on health disparities.

With this evidence in mind, and in consultation with members of the Board's Health Promotion committee, I recently signed a letter along with several other health partners encouraging the legislature to take action in the coming legislative session to raise the age of sale for tobacco products to 21. I am asking the Board to memorialize its support through this resolution.

Recommended Board Action:

Motion: The Board adopts Resolution 2016-01 urging the legislature to raise the age of sale for tobacco products.

Staff Contact: Michelle Davis