



Eta Sigma Gamma

National Professional Health Education Honorary

Tobacco 21 Resolution

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Whereas tobacco is the leading preventable cause of premature death in the United States (CDC, 2016), responsible for an estimate 480,000 deaths each year (DHHS, 2014). The overall mortality rate among both men and female smokers in the United States is three times higher than among those who have never smoked (CDC, 2016) and life expectancy for smokers is 10 years less than their non-smoking counterparts (DHHS, 2014); and

Whereas the economic costs for the United States related to smoking is more than \$300 billion annually (CDC, 2017), with approximately \$170 billion in direct medical care costs for adult smokers (Xu et al., 2014) and \$156 billion in lost productivity due to exposure to secondhand smoke and premature death (DHHS, 2014); and

Whereas thousands of young people start smoking cigarettes every day. National data shows that approximately 95% of adult smokers begin smoking before age 21 (Tobacco Free Kids, 2017) with approximately 3,200 people 18 years old and younger smoking their first cigarette each day and 350 kids under the age of 18 becoming regular daily smokers (CDC, 2015). Those individuals who reach 21 years of age as a non-smoker, have a minimal chance of ever becoming a smoker (Winickoff et al, 2014); and

Whereas nicotine delivery products such as, electronic cigarettes and similar products, have become more popular among minors, use has tripled and continues to grow surpassing current use of every other tobacco product (CDC, 2015); and

Whereas the parts of the adolescent brain responsible for decision-making, impulse control, sensation seeking, and susceptibility are vulnerable to the addictive effects of nicotine (Tobacco Free Kids, 2015) contained in tobacco and nicotine delivery products; and

Whereas a growing number of states and localities, including five states-- California, New Jersey, Oregon, Hawaii, and Maine along with 285 localities including San Antonio, New York City, Boston, Cleveland, and both Kansas Cities have increased the minimum sales and purchasing age of tobacco products to 21(Tobacco Free Kids, 2015); and

Whereas raising the legal sale and purchasing age is popular with the public, and current smokers with 3/4 of adults and seven in 10 smokers favoring raising the age to 21 (King et al., 2015); and

Whereas the Institute of Medicine predicts raising the minimum sales and purchasing age of tobacco products to 21 nationwide would lead to a 12% decrease in smoking prevalence and reductions in smoking-related mortality over time (Winickoff et al., 2017); and

Whereas the retail impact of raising the minimum sales and purchasing age nationwide would decrease tobacco retailer sales by approximately 2%, but would limit youth access and contribute to a reduction in youth tobacco use (Winickoff et al., 2017); now, therefore, be it

Resolved that Eta Sigma Gamma (ESG):

1. will advocate and support statewide and local/county comprehensive tobacco laws to raise the minimum legal purchasing age for tobacco products to 21.
2. will work in collaboration with other national organizations, such as the Society for Public Health Education (SOPHE), to increase professional education and support at both the national and state level on the importance of raising the minimum legal purchasing age for tobacco products to 21.
3. will encourage members to engage in community tobacco coalitions to advocate and educate on the inclusion of raising the minimum age for tobacco and nicotine delivery products to existing or planned comprehensive tobacco laws and how this law may impact the health of youth.

References

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