

2017 Regular Session

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 60

BY REPRESENTATIVE HOFFMANN

HEALTH/SMOKING: Requests the Louisiana Department of Health to study the desirability and feasibility of increasing the minimum age to purchase tobacco products to twenty-one

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

2 To urge and request the Louisiana Department of Health to study the desirability and  
3 feasibility of increasing the minimum age to purchase tobacco products in Louisiana  
4 to twenty-one.

5 WHEREAS, national data show the ages of eighteen to twenty-one are a critical  
6 period when many smokers move from experimental smoking to regular, daily use; and

7 WHEREAS, according to the National Survey on Drug Use and Health, over eighty  
8 percent of adult smokers smoked their first cigarette before they turned eighteen, and ninety-  
9 five percent of adult smokers begin smoking before they turn twenty-one; and

10 WHEREAS, each day in the United States, more than three thousand two hundred  
11 youth aged eighteen years or younger smoke their first cigarette, and an additional two  
12 thousand one hundred youth and young adults become daily cigarette smokers; and

13 WHEREAS, the developing brains of young people are particularly susceptible to  
14 the addictive properties of nicotine, and tobacco industry documents show that those who  
15 start smoking by the age of eighteen are almost twice as likely to become lifetime smokers  
16 as those who start after they turn twenty-one; and

17 WHEREAS, increasing the tobacco sales age to twenty-one will help counter efforts  
18 to target young people at a critical time when many move from experimenting with tobacco  
19 to regular smoking; and

1           WHEREAS, research shows that children and adolescents often turn to older friends  
2 and classmates as sources of cigarettes and raising the tobacco age to twenty-one would  
3 reduce the likelihood that a high school student will be able to legally purchase tobacco  
4 products for other students and underage friends; and

5           WHEREAS, electronic smoking device use among minors has recently tripled; and

6           WHEREAS, tobacco use is the foremost preventable cause of premature death in the  
7 United States; and

8           WHEREAS, tobacco use is responsible for approximately four hundred eighty  
9 thousand deaths a year and over twenty million premature deaths in the United States over  
10 the past fifty years since the first surgeon general's report on smoking in 1964; and

11           WHEREAS, a March 2015 report by the Institute of Medicine strongly concluded  
12 that raising the tobacco sale age to twenty-one will have a substantial positive impact on  
13 public health and save lives; and

14           WHEREAS, the study found that raising the tobacco sale age will significantly  
15 reduce the number of adolescents and young adults who start smoking, reduce  
16 smoking-caused deaths, and immediately improve the health of adolescents, young adults,  
17 and young mothers who would be deterred from smoking; and

18           WHEREAS, the study predicts that if the minimum age for the sale of tobacco  
19 products was raised to twenty-one, over time, the adult smoking rate would decline by about  
20 twelve percent and smoking-related deaths would decline by ten percent; and

21           WHEREAS, the Institute of Medicine also predicts that raising the minimum legal  
22 sales age for tobacco products to twenty-one nationwide would result in two hundred  
23 twenty-three thousand fewer premature deaths, fifty thousand fewer deaths from lung cancer,  
24 and four million two hundred thousand fewer years of life lost for those born between 2000  
25 and 2019, and that it would result in near immediate reductions in preterm birth, low birth  
26 weight, and sudden infant death syndrome; and

27           WHEREAS, in 2016, California became the second state in the United States, joining  
28 Hawaii, to raise the tobacco sale age to twenty-one; and

1           WHEREAS, at least two hundred and twenty-five localities in sixteen states have  
2 also raised the tobacco age to twenty-one, including Washington D.C., San Francisco,  
3 Boston, New York City, Chicago, Cleveland, and both Kansas cities; and

4           WHEREAS, statewide legislation to do so is also being considered in several other  
5 states; and

6           WHEREAS, three-quarters of adults in the United States favor raising the minimum  
7 legal sale age for tobacco products to twenty-one, including seven in ten smokers; and

8           WHEREAS, the annual economic impact of smoking in the United States is more  
9 than three hundred billion dollars in healthcare and lost worker productivity costs; and

10          WHEREAS, the retail impact of ordinances mandating a minimum legal sales age  
11 of twenty-one for tobacco products is minimal, with an estimated decrease of only two  
12 percent; and

13          WHEREAS, raising the legal drinking age to twenty-one led to reduced alcohol use  
14 and dependence among youth, and contributed to a decline in drunk driving fatalities.

15          THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby  
16 urge and request the Louisiana Department of Health to study the desirability and feasibility  
17 of increasing the minimum age to purchase tobacco products in Louisiana to twenty-one.

18          BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the department shall develop findings and  
19 recommendations concerning the desirability and feasibility of increasing the minimum age  
20 to purchase tobacco products to twenty-one, and shall submit such findings and  
21 recommendations in the form of a written report to the House Committee on Health and  
22 Welfare and the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare no later than thirty days prior to  
23 the convening of the 2018 Regular Session of the Legislature.

24          BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the  
25 secretary of the Louisiana Department of Health.

DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

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HCR 60 Engrossed

2017 Regular Session

Hoffmann

Requests the La. Dept. of Health to study the desirability and feasibility of increasing the minimum age to purchase tobacco products to 21.