

2018 Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 107

BY REPRESENTATIVE HOFFMANN

A RESOLUTION

To urge and request the Louisiana Department of Health to continue to study the desirability and feasibility of increasing the minimum age to purchase tobacco products in Louisiana to twenty-one, and to report findings of the study effort.

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

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

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

WHEREAS, increasing the age threshold of persons to whom tobacco can be legally sold will help counter efforts to target young people at a critical time when many move from experimenting with tobacco to regular smoking; and

WHEREAS, House Resolution No. 177 of the 2017 Regular Session urged and requested the Louisiana Department of Health, referred to hereafter as LDH, to study the desirability and feasibility of increasing the minimum age to purchase tobacco products in Louisiana to twenty-one; and

WHEREAS, though the report that LDH issued pursuant to this initial study effort contains many significant and thoroughly researched findings concerning the prevalence of tobacco use, this report also indicates that as of February, 2018, the membership of the

Louisiana Tobacco Coalition, which is the main tobacco control group of this state, is almost evenly divided on the question of raising the minimum age for purchasing tobacco; and

WHEREAS, the LDH Bureau of Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion uses evidence-based methods and interventions to reduce preventable risk factors that contribute to chronic diseases, including those associated with smoking; and

WHEREAS, this division of LDH and the public health stakeholders that it convenes are the ideal parties to continue a formal study of policy issues that can positively impact the dire public health problem of smoking prevalence in this state.

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

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the department shall develop findings and recommendations concerning this topic, and shall submit these findings and recommendations in the form of a written report to the House Committee on Health and Welfare no later than thirty days prior to the convening of the 2019 Regular Session of the Legislature.

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

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES