

## NEWS:

# Governor, General Assembly Democrats, Seek to Raise the Legal Smoking Age

MARCH 8, 2019 -- At a press event at the Delaware Public Archives, Governor John Carney on Tuesday announced his support for legislation seeking to raise the legal age for purchasing tobacco and vape products from 18 to 21.



"We know the dangers of tobacco use, and anything we can do to prevent more Delawareans from starting to smoke is a step in the right direction," Gov. Carney said. "Raising the legal tobacco sales age from 18 to 21 will help reduce the number of young people who use tobacco products, and hopefully prevent more young people from trying tobacco products in the first place."

Critics of the [pending measure](#) say 18-year-olds are adults in Delaware. They believe it is inconsistent to recognize that 18, 19, and 20-year-olds have the legal autonomy to make their own decisions -- including those regarding military service -- but should not be allowed to choose if they wish to smoke or use e-cigarettes.

They also note that should the law be enacted, young adults could easily circumvent it by purchasing their tobacco and vaping products in nearby Pennsylvania and Maryland.

Seven states -- California, New Jersey, Massachusetts, Oregon, Hawaii, Maine and Virginia -- have set the age to buy tobacco at 21.

The legislation has been released from a Senate committee and is pending action by the full chamber.

The bill's sponsorship does not include any House Republicans.