

NEWS:

Minimum Age to Buy Cigarettes, Vaping Products Soon to be 21



APRIL 12, 2019 -- Sometime this summer, young adults under the age of 21 will no longer be able to purchase cigarettes and vaping merchandise in Delaware.

Earlier this week, the House of Representatives passed [Senate Substitute 1 for Senate Bill 25](#), raising the legal age for buying tobacco products and "tobacco substitutes" from 18 to 21.

The bill cleared the lower chamber by a vote of 25 to 16, with all 15 House Republicans voting against the measure.

Democrats argued the change was needed for public health reasons, pointing to the consequences of smoking.

While not disputing the negative impacts of smoking or vaping, Republicans countered that the state should not be denying young adults the right to make their own life choices.

Opponents of the measure said it is inconsistent to maintain that 18, 19, and 20-year-olds should not be able to make a decision regarding smoking and vaping, while simultaneously recognizing that they are mature enough to serve in the military, vote in elections, get married, enter into contracts, pay taxes, and serve on a jury.

The governor supports the bill and will sign it in the near future. The law will take effect 90-days afterward.

The bill carries an estimated collective cost over the next two fiscal years of \$3.8 million due to decreased cigarette tax revenue.

Delaware will join six other states that have also raised their legal smoking age to 21. Hawaii was the first state to make the move in 2017. California, New Jersey, Massachusetts, Oregon, and Maine have since followed suit.