



KING COUNTY
Signature Report

1200 King County Courthouse
516 Third Avenue
Seattle, WA 98104

February 23, 2015

Resolution 15-04

Proposed No. 15-04.1

Sponsors

1 A RESOLUTION calling on the Washington state
2 Legislature to increase the legal age for a person to be sold
3 or given, or to purchase, attempt to purchase, or possess,
4 tobacco products or vapor products, from eighteen to
5 twenty-one years old.

6 WHEREAS, smoking is the leading preventable cause of death and
7 disease in the United States according to the U.S. Surgeon General, and

8 WHEREAS, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention,
9 cigarette smoking and exposure to secondhand smoke cause over 480,000 deaths
10 annually in the United States, including from cancer and respiratory and vascular
11 disease, and

12 WHEREAS, the U.S. Surgeon General notes that smoking by youth and
13 young adults can cause serious and potentially deadly health issues immediately
14 and into adulthood, including placing young people in danger of addiction to
15 nicotine, reduced lung function, reduced lung growth and early cardiovascular
16 damage, and

17 WHEREAS, exposure to nicotine can have lasting effects on adolescent
18 brain development, and

19 WHEREAS, statewide there are about 49,000 youth currently using
20 tobacco, with about forty youth starting smoking each day in Washington state,
21 and

22 WHEREAS, according to the 2012 Washington state healthy youth
23 survey, youth who use tobacco are more likely to use multiple substances, such as
24 marijuana or alcohol, and among tenth graders in Washington state who use
25 tobacco, about half use multiple types, like cigars or chewing tobacco, along with
26 cigarettes, and,

27 WHEREAS, historically, cigarettes have been the most popular tobacco
28 product used by youth. By grade twelve, over one-third of grade twelve students
29 report having ever smoked a cigarette, and

30 WHEREAS, 2012 Washington state healthy youth survey data show that
31 twenty-three percent of twelfth graders and thirteen percent of tenth graders in
32 King County reported using tobacco in the last thirty days, and

33 WHEREAS, 2012 Washington state healthy youth survey data show that
34 eighty-six percent of tenth graders in King County who smoke report their usual
35 source of tobacco being from a social or other source, not from buying it
36 themselves in a retail outlet, and

37 WHEREAS, the Washington state Department of Health also notes that
38 the earlier youth begin smoking cigarettes, the more likely they are to become
39 strongly addicted to nicotine. Delaying the age when young people first
40 experiment with or begin using tobacco can reduce the risk that they will become
41 addicted smokers, and

42 WHEREAS, national data show that ninety-five percent of adult smokers
43 begin smoking before they turn twenty-one. The ages of eighteen to twenty-one
44 are also a critical period when many smokers move from experimental smoking to
45 regular, daily use. While nearly half of adult smokers become daily smokers
46 before age eighteen, four out of five do so before they turn twenty-one, and

47 WHEREAS, Senate Bill 5494 and House Bill 1458, introduced this year at
48 the request of Washington state Attorney General Bob Ferguson, would increase
49 the smoking age for tobacco and vapor products from eighteen to twenty-one
50 years old, in recognition of the damage of tobacco to lives of Washington state
51 residents, particularly youth, and the enormous health care costs, \$2.8 billion,
52 directly attributed to tobacco use in the state;

53 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Health of King
54 County:

55 The Board of Health calls upon the Washington state Legislature to
56 increase the
57 legal age for a person to be sold or given, or to purchase, attempt to
58

59 purchase, or possess, tobacco products or vapor products, from eighteen to
60 twenty-one years old.
61

Resolution 15-04 was introduced on and passed by the Board of Health on 2/19/2015,
by the following vote:

Yes: 9 - Ms. Clark, Mr. Baker, Dr. Danielson, Mr. McDermott, Ms.
Wales, Mr. Dembowski and Dr. Delecki

No: 0

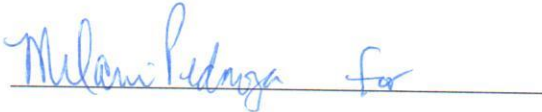
Excused: 3 - Ms. Lambert, Mr. Licata and Ms. Sawant

BOARD OF HEALTH
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON



Joe McDermott, Chair

ATTEST:



Anne Noris, Clerk of the Board

Attachments: None