

April 15, 2016

The Honorable Edmund G. Brown, Jr.  
Governor  
State of California  
State Capitol, Suite 1173  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: California Bill (Senate Bill x2-7) - Support

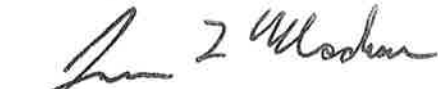
Dear Governor Brown:

On behalf of the American Medical Association (AMA) and our physician and medical student members, I am writing to express our support of Senate Bill x2-7, legislation to raise the minimum age for purchasing tobacco and electronic smoking devices from 19 to 21 years of age. It would also limit to whom a vendor may sell, offer for sale, distribute, give or furnish such products in California by increasing the purchase age to 21.

Tobacco use remains the number one cause of preventable death in the United States. Epidemiologic evidence shows that nearly 90 percent of adults who smoke on a daily basis had their first cigarette by age 18; and 90 percent of cigarettes purchased for use by those under age 18 are purchased by those aged 18-20.<sup>1</sup> Recently, the Institute of Medicine concluded that raising the tobacco age to 21 would significantly reduce smoking among youth and young adults; reduce smoking-caused deaths; and immediately improve the health of youth, young adults and young mothers who would be dissuaded from smoking. The report predicts that raising the minimum age for the sale of tobacco products to 21 will, over time, reduce the smoking rate by about 12 percent and smoking-related deaths by 10 percent, which translates into 223,000 fewer premature deaths, 50,000 fewer deaths from lung cancer, and 4.2 million fewer years of life lost.<sup>2</sup>

This legislation will protect California's youth from the dangers of tobacco use and improve public health. For the aforementioned reasons, the AMA encourages you to sign SB x2-7. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Carrie Armour, JD, Senior Legislative Attorney, Advocacy Resource Center, at (312) 464-4039 or [carrie.armour@ama-assn.org](mailto:carrie.armour@ama-assn.org). Thank you for your efforts on this important public health issue.

Sincerely,



James L. Madara, MD

cc: California Medical Association  
Jack Resneck, Jr., MD

<sup>1</sup> Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), HHS, Calculated based on data in National Household Survey on Drug Abuse, 2012. See also, HHH, "Preventing Tobacco Use Among Youth and Young Adults: A Report of the Surgeon General," 2012, <http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/reports/preventing-youth-tobacco-use/full-report.pdf>. Accessed April 11, 2016

<sup>2</sup> [https://iom.nationalacademies.org/~media/Files/Report%20Files/2015/TobaccoMinAge/tobacco\\_minimum\\_age\\_report\\_brief.pdf](https://iom.nationalacademies.org/~media/Files/Report%20Files/2015/TobaccoMinAge/tobacco_minimum_age_report_brief.pdf) Accessed April 11, 2016