

Senator Olson-

I am contacting you about SB89 heard in the Senate Finance Committee this morning.

My name is Megan Boelter and I am with the Preventing Tobacco Addiction Foundation. I was in line to provide public testimony in support of raising the minimum legal sale of age for tobacco products from 19 to 21.

Rather than allow the full minute for my testimony, I was cut off at 27 seconds directly after my introduction - one which was delayed by the online system.

In light of that treatment, I wish to share a few important details that you may read at your leisure.

1. Raising the MLSA from 19-21 for the sale of tobacco and nicotine is aligned with the federal law, the military's policy (Dept of Defense) and the Alaska Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development declaration that the "minimum age to buy tobacco products, electronic smoking delivery systems or products containing nicotine to any person younger than 21" even though existing state law still lists the minimum age as 19.

2. A recent report in the Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health demonstrated that a considerable proportion of youth still obtain e-cigarettes from a retail source (43.1%) - including gas stations, vape shops, and convenience stores.

3. Over ten communities in Alaska have already implemented an e-cigarette tax, including Juneau (45% wholesale), Sitka (90% wholesale), and Anchorage (55% wholesale). The state is now poised to do the same under SB89.

I understand that the committee is pressed for time, however, the 27 seconds allowed did not provide enough of an opportunity to share information which may help in assessing SB89. I appreciate your kindness and respect in considering the above.

Megan Boelter

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