

**Jason Kreizenbeck, Lobby Idaho, LLC**  
**Comments to Senate Health and Welfare Committee**  
**Senate Bill 1284**  
February 15, 2022

My name is Jason Kreizenbeck, a contract lobbyist in Boise with the firm Lobby Idaho, LLC, here today on behalf of my client Altria and its affiliates Philip Morris USA, John Middleton, US Smokeless Tobacco Company, and Helix Innovations.

I am here to present Senate Bill 1284, which is a proposal to raise the minimum age to purchase tobacco and e-vapor products in Idaho from 18 to 21 years old. This change will make Idaho law consistent with federal law that has been in place since December of 2019.

Senate Bill 1284 also makes it lawful for employees of retail stores who are 19 and 20 years old to sell and distribute tobacco and e-vapor products in the course and scope of their employment.

My client has introduced this legislation because we believe a minimum age of 21 is one of the most effective ways of reducing underage use of tobacco products – a goal we strongly support. We agree with others that raising the minimum age under state law is essential for effective enforcement and for consistent practices among retailers selling tobacco products.

In 2018, underage use of e-vapor products sharply increased, and raising the minimum age became an important component of turning this trend around. The data was clear. Youth under eighteen get tobacco products primarily from friends or siblings who can legally purchase them. 80% of high school students in the U.S. turn 18 before they graduate and, according to government data, 80% of youth access tobacco products through social sources.

In 2019, Congress passed, and the president signed, bi-partisan legislation setting the federal minimum age at 21, and that federal law is now fully in effect. While that was an important step, it was not enough. Most minimum age enforcement happens in the states. Differences in federal and state minimum age laws lead to confusion and to inconsistent practices across retail. That's why we strongly support states moving to 21. To date, 39 states covering 84% of the U.S. population have made this change.

A state that maintains a minimum age of purchase of 18 will create confusion for consumers and retailers, meaning retailers selling to 19-year-olds would be in violation of federal law, but not state law. By increasing the Idaho legal age of purchase to 21, we are aligning tobacco and e-vapor products with other adult products like beer, wine and distilled spirits.

Thank you for opportunity to present SB 1284 to you today and I would respectfully ask that you make a motion to send it to the floor with a "do pass" recommendation.

Thank you and I'm happy to answer any questions.