*Date*

To The Editor:

As a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (name of your city/town) resident, I support \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (name of Representative or Senator) efforts in raising the minimum purchasing age of tobacco products from eighteen to twenty-one in Rhode Island.

A March, 2015 [Institute of Medicine study](http://iom.nationalacademies.org/Reports/2015/TobaccoMinimumAgeReport.aspx) concluded that raising the legal age of purchase for tobacco products to 21 nationwide would significantly reduce the number of youth who start smoking, save 223,000 adults from premature tobacco-related deaths by 2019, and, in time, result in a 12% reduction in the nation’s smoking rate.

Passage of this simple, life-saving bill would make Rhode Island the third state in the nation to raise the legal age of tobacco and electronic cigarette purchase to 21 (Hawaii became the first state in June, 2015 and California the second in May, 2016). According to [tobacco21.org](http://tobacco21.org/) there are now \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (check the website for the updated number) localities that have enacted Tobacco 21 laws, including New York City and over 140 cities and towns in our neighboring state, Massachusetts. Federal legislation was also introduced in 2016 by our U.S. Senators Jack Reed and Sheldon Whitehouse.

Raising the tobacco purchase age to 21 is a common-sense action that will reduce smoking and save lives, with no cost to state taxpayers. The cost of inaction will be continued preventable death, disease and high healthcare costs.

Respectfully,

Your Name

[address]