

Support for regulations:

Caroline DeVane: Amherst Resident FOR

“ Hello,

As an Amherst resident, I just wanted to log my support of the Nicotine-Free Generation program. I briefly did client work with a transnational tobacco company through my job at a global consultancy. I've seen on the back end how position papers are written from willfully misinterpreting tobacco use data, then how specious conclusions are used to lobby governments all over the world to maintain access to advertising to children and to lower taxation. It seems that tobacco use will continue while the legal structures permit advertising and selling to young people, and that challenging this access by restricting tobacco/nicotine sales is only possible at the local level.

Caroline DeVane”

Heather Warner: Hampshire Franklin Tobacco-Free Community Partnership FOR

“Dear Kiko Malin & Health Board Members Betsy Brooks, Risha Hess, Jack Jemsek and Premila Nair, I grew up in Amherst, went to ARHS and then to UMASS. I bought my first cigarette in Amherst at Augies when I was 14 and became a two-pack a day smoker. Quitting was the hardest and best thing I ever did. Many people are not so lucky. The Nicotine industry now promotes synthetic nicotine products like vapes and nicotine pouches that are high potency and absorb into the blood stream faster. There is no beginning or end when using these products as there is for cigarettes. This encourages more constant use, makes it harder to quit, and does not allow for a "resting" period for the lungs. Nicotine Free Generation under the local Boards of Health is an effective way to stop the ever changing and predatory practices of Big Tobacco. Over the past two decades in my role as SPIFFY Coalition Coordinator and now as the director of the Hampshire Franklin Tobacco-Free Community Partnership, I have worked closely with the Amherst Public Schools, UMass Campus and Community Coalition (CCC), Board of Health, retailers and law enforcement to ensure that substances remain out of the hands of young people. Prior to the pandemic, I co-chaired the Amherst Alcohol Retailer Subcommittee of the CCC and SPIFFY. I am sensitive to the needs of the retail community. Because NFG is gradual, it provides retailers time to adjust their business model to be less reliant on nicotine while the market declines only marginally each year. 18 Communities across the state have passed NFG including Belchertown, Pelham and Conway and most recently South Hadley. Amherst was a leader in passing age 21 nicotine sales and eliminating flavored nicotine products. As more communities across the state followed the lead of communities like Amherst, it provided the needed momentum for legislators to enact similar laws for the state and eventually nationally. Today, neighboring communities are hoping to pass comprehensive nicotine regulations and are looking to Amherst to lead the way to a Nicotine Free Generation. We need to protect teens from nicotine dependence by reducing access to tobacco and nicotine products. Easy access to these products increases the likelihood that youth will start using and become dependent on nicotine¹. Some newer products have higher levels of nicotine and use synthetic nicotine salts which enter

the bloodstream faster increasing the likelihood of addiction². The tobacco industry understands that the developing teen brain is particularly susceptible to nicotine dependence, which is why they shamelessly market to youth with new 2 Marketing of “Tobacco-Free” and “Synthetic Nicotine” Products, Ramamurthi D., Chau, S., Lu, Z., et al, White Paper Stanford Research into the Impact of Tobacco Advertising, Published March 8, 2022. Retrieved 12-10-24 at: <chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://tobacco-img.stanford.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/13161808/Synthetic-Nicotine-White-Paper-3-8-2022F.pdf> 1 Sweet, Cheap and Easy to Get. <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/vapes-and-industry-tactics> Page 2. products that evade flavor regulations and taxes making them more appealing and affordable to teens. As adults in our community, we have both the ability and an obligation to make policies that keep pace with an industry business model that will always require a new generation of nicotine users. Why consider Nicotine-Free Generation? Nicotine-Free Generation (NFG) policies phase out nicotine sales over generations, effectively cutting off the pipeline of future smokers. Importantly, this policy does not restrict adults who can currently buy nicotine products from continuing to buy them. Considering these policies is prudent as part of a comprehensive approach because the nicotine industry continues to innovate, finding loopholes in our laws that allow them to pursue and addict teens. Left unchecked, the tobacco and nicotine industry will continue to target disadvantaged and vulnerable communities including young people, BIPOC communities, and LGBTQAI+ communities. Massachusetts and local Health Boards have successfully worked to educate and activate communities on issues of health equity and against industry schemes that target youth. By prioritizing the health of our youth we are building healthy communities for our future. I applaud the Boards of Health in our region for working to promote healthy communities and counter the profiteering that stands in the way of that goal. Sincerely, Heather Warner, MPH Hampshire Franklin Tobacco-Free Community Partnership hwarner@collaborative.org”

Zachary Rich, MD: FOR

“My name is Zachary Rich, and I am a Pulmonary and Critical Care physician. I make my living, and pay my mortgage, by treating the devastating consequences of tobacco use. Every day, I care for patients suffering from chronic lung disease, heart disease, and cancers caused by nicotine addiction that often began in adolescence.

The proposed nicotine-free generation policy represents one of the most meaningful public health measures our community can take to protect future generations from this cycle of addiction and disease. By preventing tobacco and nicotine sales to individuals born after 2005, Amherst has an opportunity to lead the state and the nation in advancing a healthier, tobacco-free future.

I strongly urge you to vote in favor of adopting this policy.

Sincerely, Zachary Rich, MD”

Ken Elstein: Board of Health, Town of Belchertown **FOR**

Maureen Buzby: Tobacco Inspection Coordinator, Town of Melrose **FOR**

TO: Amherst Board of Health:

Betsy Brooks
Risha Hess
Jack Jemsek
Premila Nair

FROM: Ken Elstein, Board of Health, Town of Belchertown
Maureen Buzby, Tobacco Inspection Coordinator, Town of Melrose

SUBJECT: Nicotine Free Generation in Amherst

DATE: October 16, 2025

We look forward to your upcoming Board of Health hearing, after which we hope Amherst joins our towns in enacting Nicotine Free Generation (NFG). By current count, over 580,000 Massachusetts residents live in towns that have enacted NFG.

We are very excited that this Tuesday, **South Hadley's Board of Health unanimously voted to enact Nicotine Free Generation**, with a cutoff date of 01/01/2005. South Hadley joins your other neighbors Belchertown and Pelham, making the policy more effective for the kids in all of our communities.

Last December, Belchertown held its public hearing and voted the same night in support of Nicotine Free Generation. At your meeting last week, one of your members asked me to provide you with the video of our high school students' testimony in support of NFG. No doubt, a great many ARHS students agree that their peers should not die prematurely of nicotine addiction.

<https://www.wevideo.com/view/3912963235>

Please note that you gave current licensees a huge financial gift, just six months ago: you provided a quasi-monopoly by preventing any new licenses. This means that no prospective competitor can open across the street from a current licensee:

"The number of Tobacco Product Sales Permits issued in Amherst shall not exceed fourteen".
- Regulation of the Board of Health: Restricting the Sale of Nicotine Products, V.C.3.i.i, April 3, 2025

* * *

Enclosed are two handouts.

One contains additional testimony from high school students in support of NFG.

Also enclosed are photos of addictive products that Big Tobacco is pushing on our young people. Obviously, the "teddy bear" vape is not marketed to adults or even older teens, but likely to preteens. For older teens, they say you can "Vape and Play Music Wirelessly from Your Phone!"

We thank you for your consideration of these important issues.

Ken & Maureen *Ken Elstein@gmail.com*

NICOTINE FREE GENERATION

Young People Testify

As an "athlete, I've seen many of my teammates, become addicted and lose their spots on the team and give up on their long-term dreams due to bad health... It's very hard to avoid once you start."

— Anonymous high school Junior

"I am a rising junior ... and wanted to share my experience with nicotine addiction. [In] this generation smoking is seen as 'cool' and given how easy it [is] to get your hands on nicotine products such as vapes... you are bound to get addicted if you don't know the side effects. I think speaking [up] about adolescent addiction is super important as this generation is our future. [I've] seen many friends get addicted and not [be] able to stop but ultimately what led me to stop smoking entirely was noticing my lungs worsen. I do [high school sports] and [I've] experienced a decline in my performance due to this addiction."

— Anonymous high school Junior

"My friend often took Zyn at work because of that he got fired not only because he affected the customers, but also negatively impacted his own life and wellbeing."

— James Armand, high school Junior

"My friend started using vapes to cope with stress, but it soon became a daily habit. This reliance on vaping not only strained her health but also caused friction in our relationship and her relationship with her parents."

— Anonymous high school Junior

"One of my close friends has started to vape and it's making her a different person that I don't want to be friends with anymore."

— Anonymous middle school 8th grader

"My boss at work does Zyns, along with some other employees. There is a bag filled with Zyn containers in our break room. My boss's wife, who comes to visit at work sometimes doesn't know that my boss still does Zyns. She found a container at their house a year or two ago and supposedly poured out the Zyns and filled it with water because she was unhappy her husband did them. So now, he only does them at work, keeping a secret from his wife. everyone at work knows that he does them and that his wife doesn't know, so when she comes we have to hide the bag that has the Zyns. Seeing these interactions from an outside perspective makes their relationship seem unhealthy because my boss is keeping secrets from his wife, and everyone at work helps him hide them. Zyns in this example are negatively affecting this relationship, which goes to show how they don't only cause health problems but other problems in one's life as well."

— Anonymous high school Junior

"I have had student-athletes who were addicted to nicotine vapes to the point where they were unable to practice or play without using one. This became pervasive one year and ended up causing our athletes issues both in how they performed late in games and how they interacted with one another. When we discussed this issue, several of the players have suggested that they felt unable to overcome this addiction on their own."

— Douglas Kopsco, High School Football Coach and English Teacher



Against regulations:

Martha Jorz: Amherst Resident: **AGAINST**

“ I am against banning tobacco products to future generations. I am over 21 and use tobacco for offerings when I do my prayers. This is a traditional practice and fairly common throughout our country. Not only for Native Americans, but other cultures as well. If we ban tobacco products for future generations how will we be able to teach those traditions to the next seven generations? Do we, as a community, really want to do that? Martha Jorz An Amherst resident”

Jim Brissette: Amherst Resident: **AGAINST**

“To Amherst Town Officials:

I recommend a NO vote on this proposal.

To ban those born after 2005 from an option of say smoking a cigar from time to time when they are say 40 or 50 years old seems absurd when they can smoke legal pot from 21 til they die.

If you're going to ban these products for those born after 2005, you should be consistent and also ban the sale to them of any vaping/smoking pot products as well since those can also cause addiction, lung cancer, and other health problems.

This proposal goes too far. Those over 21 are adults - and have technically been since they turned 18. This 3-year delay is reasonable. To go beyond that age limit, for those born after 2005, seems an over-reach. It also could hurt small shops as folks who want to buy nicotine products will just go to neighboring towns that do not have such a law. Or worse, buy illegal products in town that could be even more dangerous due to added chemicals/other drugs.

Please vote NO.

Thank you,

Jim Brissette”
