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Subject: Belchertown becomes the 11th municipality to adopt nicotine-free generation regulations

For Immediate Release

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Belchertown becomes the 11th municipality to adopt nicotine-free generation regulations

(Belchertown, MA December 12, 2024)– The Belchertown Board of Health voted overwhelmingly at its meeting on December 11 to adopt groundbreaking nicotine-free generation regulations, becoming the 11th municipality in Massachusetts to prohibit the sale of nicotine products to anyone born on or after January 1, 2004. This action positions Belchertown as a leader in the movement toward creating a nicotine-free generation, aiming to curb youth access to addictive nicotine products and mitigate long-term health risks.

Additionally, the Board voted to restrict the sale of flavored nicotine pouches in the town to adult-only tobacco stores, with a 60-day implementation period for businesses to comply.

The public hearing preceding the vote was well-attended, with over 50 participants joining both in person and virtually. Attendees included residents, non-residents, store owners, and advocates representing both sides of the issue. The Board allowed 30 minutes for public comments, fostering a dynamic discussion before deliberating on the regulations.

"Today's vote underscores Belchertown's commitment to prioritizing public health, especially for our youth," said Board member Ken Elstein. "By taking these measures, we are setting the stage for a healthier future and joining a growing number of communities dedicated to protecting the next generation from the harmful effects of nicotine addiction."

This local action coincides with broader statewide efforts to address nicotine use. A recent announcement revealed that nicotine-free generation legislation is set to be introduced in the Massachusetts legislature in January 2025, signaling growing momentum for this public health initiative.

The Board of Health encourages businesses and residents to review the new regulations and prepare for their implementation. For more information, please contact the Belchertown Board of Health at 413-323-0406.

About the Belchertown Board of Health

The Belchertown Board of Health is committed to protecting and promoting the health and well-being of the community through education, advocacy, and regulation. The Board addresses a range of public health issues, from disease prevention to environmental health, ensuring a safe and healthy community for all residents.

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