

Responses to Big Tobacco on NFG

The NFG policy uses a birthdate to set a limit on dealers' ability to sell nicotine products. NFG prevents the creation of future demand for nicotine by preventing sales to everyone born after the designated birth date. Users who currently are legally sold nicotine are NOT affected.

Over **half a million** Massachusetts residents live in communities that already enacted NFG to protect their young people.

9,300 Massachusetts residents die of nicotine addiction each year. (Many of them lived their lives in your community. How many more of your residents need to die?)

-- American Lung Association

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Big Tobacco sells an often-fatal addictive drug (nicotine) throughout the world. Its representatives in Massachusetts oppose Nicotine Free Generation, since they need to continue to addict young people, to replace those who died of nicotine early in life. (Annual Big Tobacco marketing spent in MA: \$86.1 million.)

1. **Big Tobacco** says: "Tobacco sales are good for the local economy."

Response: NOT TRUE!

- Annual health care costs in MA directly caused by smoking: \$4,740,000,000.
- Residents' state and local **tax burden** from smoking-caused government expenditures: \$1,117 per household.
- The total cost per capita of nicotine for all of us is \$1,813.87, or \$7,255.48 for a family of four.
(Source: CDC, using 2018 prices.)
- The average Massachusetts smoker spends \$3,211 annually on addictive nicotine.
-- <https://www.forbes.com/sites/brianboswell/2022/06/21/how-to-pay-for-college-with-cigarettes/>

2. **Big Tobacco** says: "We don't market to kids."

Response: NOT TRUE! "9,000 kids (under 18) try cigarettes for the first time each year."

-- Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids

Published articles show kids are twice as sensitive to tobacco advertising as adults. One-third of underage experimentation is attributable to Big Tobacco advertising.

3. **Big Tobacco** says: Smokers will just go elsewhere to buy nicotine.

Response: Since NFG is not like prohibition, some leakage is inevitable. After all, an addiction is an addiction. However, in the first municipality that raised its minimum age from 18 to 21, completely surrounded by communities with the earlier age limit, a peer-reviewed study showed a nearly 50% drop in usage by high school students.

4. **Big Tobacco** says drug dealers have a right to sell whatever products they choose.

Response: The Mass. Supreme Court *unanimously* upheld NFG policy. Like asbestos or lead paint, selling tobacco is not a constitutional right. The purchase, use, or possession of nicotine is never criminalized.

5. **Big Tobacco** says NFG will have little effect on saving lives in your community.

Response: NOT TRUE. "We estimated that 1,186,500 lung cancer deaths in people born during 2006-2010 could be prevented if (a tobacco free generation) was achieved." -- Lancet Public Health, October 2024

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/39366730/>

6. **Big Tobacco** claims convenience stores need to sell addictive products.

Response: Initially, NFG will have negligible effect on convenience stores legal sales, since so few young people are affected. From snacks to lottery tickets to gasoline, stores have years to expand their other businesses. One convenience store owner told us he loses only one purchaser every 10 days.

7. **Big Tobacco** was **RIGHT** about some things.

"Economic arguments often used by the industry to scare off smoking ban activity ... simply had no credibility with the public, which isn't surprising when you consider that our dire predictions in the past rarely came true."

— Philip Morris internal document, 1994