

6 in 10 favor Tobacco 21 in Kentucky; support has been steady since 2015

The 2019 **Kentucky Health Issues Poll**, sponsored by Interact for Health and the Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky, asked Kentucky adults their opinions about increasing the minimum legal age of sale for tobacco products from 18 to 21. This policy is commonly known as Tobacco 21. Research suggests that Tobacco 21 laws delay the age at which young adults start to smoke.¹

On the national level, in December 2019 legislation was signed to raise the federal minimum age of sale of tobacco products from 18 to 21.² That same month a bill was filed in the Kentucky General Assembly to change Kentucky's minimum legal age from 18 to 21 to comply with the new federal law. This bill was signed into law by the governor of Kentucky in March 2020.³

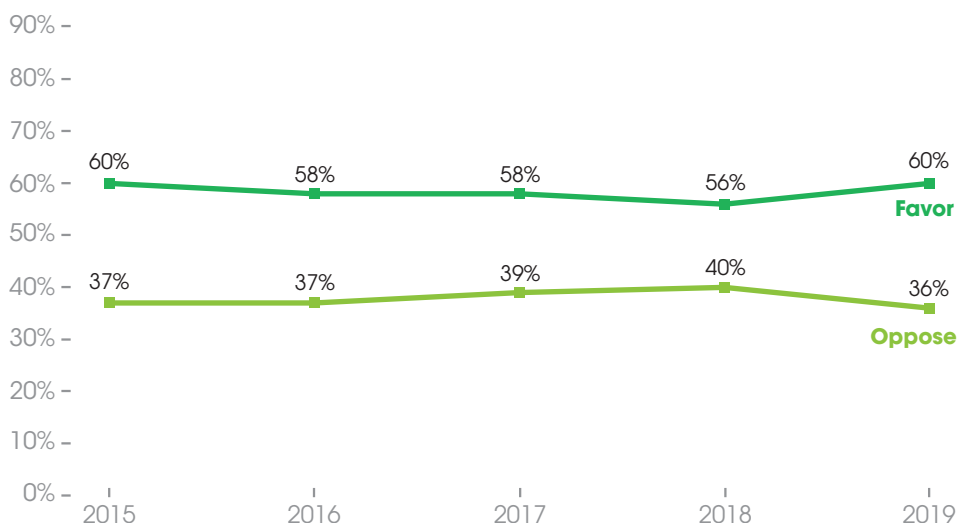
Prior to the federal law, more than half the population of the

¹ Institute of Medicine of the National Academies, *Public Health Implications of Raising the Minimum Age of Legal Access to Tobacco Products*, March 2015. Accessed Jan. 8, 2020, from <https://bit.ly/2GeRkb0>

² Please see the notification on the U.S. Food & Drug Administration site, Dec. 20, 2019: <https://bit.ly/3aCdVfV>

³ Please see the full Kentucky bill history at <https://bit.ly/318omib>

Do you favor or oppose increasing the minimum legal age to purchase tobacco products from 18 years of age to 21 years of age? (Percentages may not add to 100% because the response "don't know" is not included.)



SOURCE: 2019 Kentucky Health Issues Poll (released June 2020)



United States was covered by a local or statewide Tobacco 21 law. Nineteen states had already raised the minimum legal sale age to 21 years old.⁴ In 2015, the first year KHIP asked this question,⁵ only Hawaii had such a law.

⁴ For a list of states, please see <https://bit.ly/3abqDuU>.

⁵ KHIP asked: "Some people favor increasing the minimum legal age to purchase tobacco products from 18 years of age to 21 years of age, while others do not. What about you? Do you favor or oppose increasing the minimum legal age to purchase tobacco products from 18 years of age to 21 years of age?"

6 in 10 favor raising age to buy tobacco to 21

Between 2015 and 2019, support for Tobacco 21 remained steady. About 60% of Kentucky adults favored and 40% opposed raising the minimum age to buy tobacco to 21.

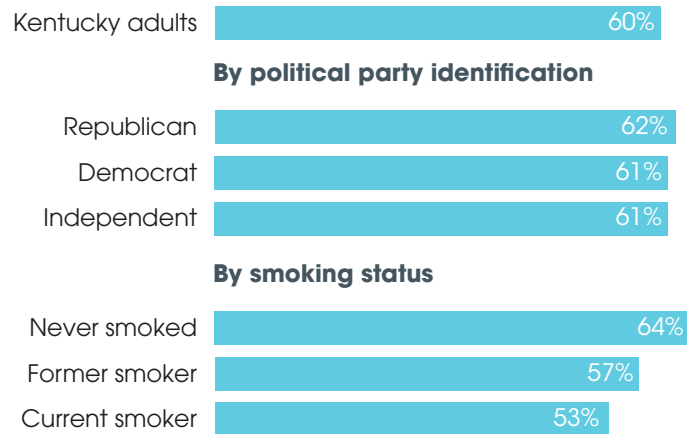
In 2019, similar majorities of Democrats (61%), Republicans (62%) and Independents (61%) favored Tobacco 21. (See graph on next page.)

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Half of current smokers favor Tobacco 21

One in 2 Kentucky adults who currently smoke cigarettes (53%) supported increasing the minimum legal age to buy tobacco products from 18 to 21. About 6 in 10 former smokers (57%) and 6 in 10 Kentucky adults who have never smoked (64%) favored such a law.

Percentage of Kentucky adults who favor increasing the legal age to purchase tobacco to 21



SOURCE: 2019 Kentucky Health Issues Poll (released June 2020)



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