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Cleveland bans tobacco, e-cigarette sales to people under 21

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Cleveland City Council on Monday outlawed the sale of smoking products, including electronic cigarettes shown here, to people under the age of 21. (The Associated Press)



By [Leila Atassi, cleveland.com](#)

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CLEVELAND, Ohio -- Soon, smokers under the age of 21 will not be able to buy cigarettes, tobacco or other smoking products, including electronic cigarettes, in the city of Cleveland.

City Council on Monday [passed legislation banning the sale or distribution](#) of the products to young adults, in the hope that increasing the minimum sales age from 18 would disrupt the supply to adolescents and teens.

Council also passed a resolution calling for the city to follow the Cleveland Clinic's lead and begin hiring only non-smokers by 2017 -- a change that Councilman Joe

METRO COLUMNISTS

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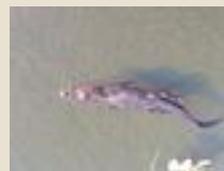
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Cimperman, who sponsored the legislation, believes could mark an overall shift in Clevelanders' attitudes about smoking.

Council members Dona Brady and Brian Kazy voted against both pieces of legislation. Michael Polensek voted no on increasing the minimum sales age.

Some council members expressed concern at recent committee hearings that the legislation increasing the minimum purchase age would criminalize the act of young adults sharing cigarettes among friends and would unfairly target the black community by making cigarette use probable cause for stopping black youths.

That issue was resolved with an amendment Monday, clarifying that the new restrictions apply only to vendors who sell tobacco and smoking products, and not to consumers.

Under the ordinance, a first offense would be a fourth-degree misdemeanor, punishable by up to 30 days in jail or a \$250 fine. Subsequent offenses would be second degree misdemeanors, which could carry a 90-day jail sentence



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Councilman Matt Zone asked during Monday's committee hearing if the city's Health Department could assume responsibility for enforcement, instead of police.

Council can revisit that issue and propose amendments before the law takes effect, 120 days after Mayor Frank Jackson signs it into law, Council President Kevin Kelley said.

Council has postponed a vote on a third piece in the package that would ban the sale of flavored tobacco products everywhere but in retail tobacco stores.

Kelley said in an interview Monday that the council is still seeking to clarify aspects of the ordinance, such as what constitutes a "flavor" and whether menthol cigarettes fall under that category.

Cimperman said the legislative package is intended to protect teenagers from becoming addicted to cigarettes and falling victim to the lifelong health problems associated with smoking.

Dr. Rob Crane, president of Tobacco 21, a Columbus-



based agency urging state and local governments to increase the legal minimum sales age, testified that new data provide strong evidence that such laws can decrease the number of adolescents who start smoking by as much as 25 percent.

Crane said such laws work because young adults between the ages of 18 and 20 make up only two percent of cigarette sales -- but represent 90 percent of the suppliers to kids under 18. Increasing the legal purchasing age would naturally interrupt the supply to teens, he said.

And limiting access to flavored smoking products makes youths less likely to begin smoking, experts testified.

The package of ordinances has drawn criticism, however, from convenience store owners, who testified before Council's Health and Human Services Committee that the restrictions would undercut their businesses and seem to favor big smoke shops – most of which are located on the city's West side.

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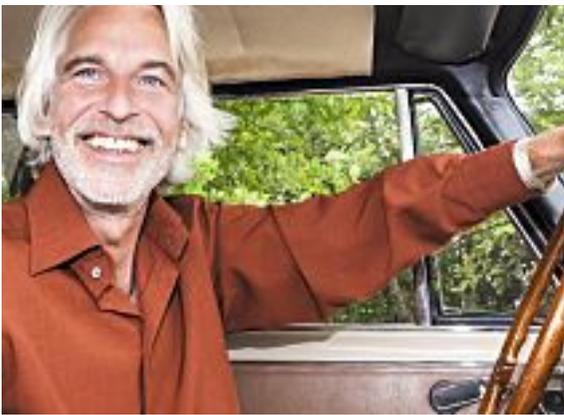
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Imwatchingyou

26 minutes ago

Unenforceable, as it's contrary to State law.....

Like Reply



catter

36 minutes ago

So.....Who's going to pay for that new scoreboard at Progressive Field??

1 Like Reply



OldRuss

51 minutes ago

With the disproportionately high rate of violent crime in the City of Cleveland, one would think Council would focus their energies on that. Creating another class of criminals isn't helping whatsoever.

1 Like Reply



AmericansRfat

2 hours ago

Nothing but whiney crybabies. You hate it so much, run for mayor and change the law. Wah!!!!!!! You cant smoke unless your 21! Wah!!!!!! Boo hoo!!!!

Like Reply



hillaryforPrison2016

4 hours ago

so much for freedom..... a handful of communists are running the city..... how pathetic..... this new "ban" needs to be challenged in court..... business owners and legal adults are getting the shaft, this will just start the downward spiral of these

dooshnozzles passing bans on anything they want shame on them commie traitors

1  Like Reply



Clutch93

5 hours ago

I just scrolled through the older comments. In regard to the dangers of smoking and drinking, they are both unhealthy practices. As a biology major, I was required to take certain classes that emphasized these areas, including one specifically in drugs and behavior. I can't claim to be an expert, and my former professor would probably hate to hear me say this, but many activities that you do on a daily basis are statistically more dangerous to health/wellness (driving in many instances, high-fat diets, etc.). Additionally, if you are going to defend the legislation because it is for the common good, how can you justify not applying it to everyone, regardless of age? Medicare, and insurance costs in general, would decrease? Maybe the lawmakers think too health of a population would lead to increased lifespans and even bigger problems. I guess people tend to see and believe what they want to, but I think most would agree this is utterly ridiculous.

1  Like Reply



wolf7

2 hours ago

@Clutch93 Nearly everyone who smokes started when he was a teenager. That's why.

You're welcome.

Like Reply



Clutch93

5 hours ago

Non-smoker here, but this is ridiculous. The discrepancies in the legal system of this country are unbelievable, especially in terms of arbitrary age-related laws. Congratulations high school graduate! I will hire you because I need a worker. Just be warned that although you are an adult, you aren't quite a true adult. Want to buy some alcohol? Sorry, too young. Want to buy a pack of smokes? Sorry, can't spend your hard-earned money there either. Want to rent a car or get a hotel room or vacation condo? Sorry, you are not mature enough. Would you like to serve your country and fight to protect those legislators and laws that give you so much freedom (sarcastic, although the USA is still the greatest country in the world)? Would you like to contribute to the tax on the poor and buy a lottery ticket? Go right ahead. Hopefully those examples clearly illustrate how many laws are unfair to law-abiding citizens. Most of the legislature does not help anyone, but definitely work against younger individuals. Where does the absurd lawmaking end? I am getting sick of career politicians with agendas, who think they need to draw up crazy ideas to justify their office. Maybe some of the blame is on us though. We need to continue to speak up and possibly run for local office, as in the old days, when local citizens held a day job and served local office part-time.

3   Like Reply



Typical Liberal

5 hours ago

I like to ban stuff. Its fun.

Like Reply



hillaryforPrison2016

4 hours ago



@Typical Liberal too bad we cant ban your oxygen supply

2 Like Reply



Zebra151

5 hours ago

Idiots, period.

Thank you.

1 Like Reply



Davy

7 hours ago

Welp, that's Joe Cimperman for ya. Pretty soon we'll have womens bathrooms and locker rooms that men will have permission to go into legally. Just need to make sure they shave their chin and put lip stick on. Don't worry about your wives or daughters - Joe says the perverts and pedophiles wouldn't dare put a skirt on and try to come in. Hopefully after that passes he'll skip all the pesky city services and safety crap and move right onto our fat society and maybe create some legislation to limit twinkie and ho-ho intake because that's really bad for our bodies and he knows what's best for all of us. Thanks Joe.

3 Like Reply



Model29

7 hours ago

Cimperman is a joke. 18-year-olds can fight and die defending the United States, but Cimperman thinks they are too young to smoke.

3 Like Reply



Roger Dorn

7 hours ago

Aren't the ballpark and arena paid for, in part, by tobacco sales tax? What's the plan to make up for the lost revenue?

1 Like Reply



iwtfma2010

7 hours ago

@Roger Dorn Cuyahoga taxes (Sin Tax) pay for the stadiums owned by millionaires.

1 Like Reply



iwtfma2010

7 hours ago

I have a feeling the Cleveland Clinic is pulling the strings on the puppets that sit on the council for them, trying to make it a "Healthy City" The Clinic has been pushing around private companies to "Go healthy" with a Company wide wellness solution while making a nice profit from it. If they can convince the City to do it. They will use it as a new marketing tool for private companies to do the same.

2 Like Reply



baron10

7 hours ago

cleveland city council is a joke.....largest waste of money in city government.....

crimes out of control

road are pathetic

crooks collecting pay and not working in every dept

and this is what they are working on

morons

4  Like Reply



fembeast1

7 hours ago

.. yes, because all Clevelanders want to work for the city. smdh. Cimperman is a dolt

1  Like Reply



old white guy

7 hours ago

so you are old enough die for your country, but not old enough to have a beer or a cigar.

Talk about hypocrisy. Let's raise the voting age to 21 then also, eh?

6  Like Reply



Dante Hlcks

7 hours ago

@old white guy you restrict things you want to discourage dummy.

1  Like Reply



old white guy

7 hours ago

@Dante Hicks

Great. Lets start with restricting them from serving until they are 21 then also, dummy. War is worse for you than a can of beer or a pack of marlboros

7 Like Reply



Dante Hicks

7 hours ago

@old white guy @Dante Hicks

Don't you want to encourage service to the nation dummy.

Like Reply



bobkraussr

5 hours ago

@Dante Hicks @old white guy

there are a lot of dummies around here

Like Reply



Zebra151

5 hours ago

@old white guy @Dante Hicks

And no voting until 25 at least.

Like Reply



howbout

8 hours ago

Rubbish collection is non-existent, the streets have fallen apart and this is what city council is focused on? Total incompetence

3 Like Reply



howbout

8 hours ago

Council is picking the low hanging fruit. What ever happened to banning plastic bags? Useless council members.

2 Like Reply



Dante Hicks

8 hours ago

@howbout There should be a charge for people to use plastic bags. That cost is passed on to all consumers but it should only be paid for by the bums that use them.

1 Like Reply



Roger Dorn

7 hours ago

@Dante Hicks @howbout There already are towns that have done away with plastic bags. People have to bring their own bags or pay 10 cents per paper bag.

1 Like Reply



Dante Hicks

7 hours ago

@Roger Dorn @Dante



Hlcks @howbout as they should.

1 Like Reply



mancalleddsun

8 hours ago

Is there a grandfather clause for people who are 18-20 and can now legally buy tobacco?

Like Reply



TPohorence

8 hours ago

@mancalleddsun I would think not. Remember, you're not smart enough to make that decision.

3 Like Reply



Dante Hlcks

8 hours ago

@TPohorence @mancalleddsun If you smoke, you obviously are not smart enough to make the decision.

1 Like Reply



Motorhead

8 hours ago

@Dante Hlcks @TPohorence @mancalleddsun That is irrelevant and none of your business if someone wants to smoke or not.

1  Like [Reply](#)



Dante Hicks 8 hours ago

[@Motorhead](#) [@Dante Hicks](#) [@TPohorence](#) [@mancalledsun](#) I am just responding to TPo.

[Like](#) [Reply](#)



TPohorence 8 hours ago

[@Dante Hicks](#) [@TPohorence](#) [@mancalledsun](#) That's not your decision to make. So which week kneed councilman are you?

2  

[Like](#) [Reply](#)



Dante Hicks 8 hours ago

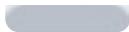
[@TPohorence](#) [@Dante Hicks](#) [@mancalledsun](#) I am not on Council. I am just someone concerned about health.

1  [Like](#) [Reply](#)



TPohorence 8 hours ago

[@Dante](#)



Hlcks @TPohorence @manc alledsun I think you lie.

Like Reply



kjb99

8 hours ago

@Dante Hlcks @TPohorence @manc alledsun So you are saying that whites are smarter than blacks because I higher percentage of the black community smoke than the white community?

Like Reply



Dante Hlcks

8 hours ago

@kjb99 @Dante Hlcks @TPohorence @manc alledsun are you sure about that?

The CDC disagrees.

<http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/campaign/tips/resources/data/cigarette-smoking-in-united-states.html>

Bye Bye racist

[Like](#) [Reply](#)



TPohorence

8 hours ago

@Dante
Hicks @kjb99 @TPohorence
@mancalledsun So you can't think of anything else you throw that in. You must be a councilman. That's the kind of stuff they do when they can't think of anything else.

[Like](#) [Reply](#)



Roger Dorn

7 hours ago

@mancalledsun I'm fairly certain there was some sort of grandfather clause when alcohol sales went from 18 to 21. As for tobacco, I'm not sure and neither are any of these other people who commented.

[Like](#) [Reply](#)



mancalledsun

6 hours ago

Indeed there was

[Like](#) [Reply](#)



Motorhead

8 hours ago

Once again, the liberty of legal adults are abused by some level



of nanny-state government. What a joke.

Meanwhile, a company can have its terms of employment, so if a company chooses to not hire smokers, it's up to the company. Keep the statistis out of it.

3  Like Reply



republicans just dont get it

8 hours ago

will do nothing. but i'm all for hiring only non smokers.

2  Like Reply



Cleveland is the Next Detroit

8 hours ago

My stores in Summit and Lorain Counties will benefit.

Like Reply



Dante Hicks

8 hours ago

@Cleveland is the Next Detroit No they won't.

Nobody from Cleveland is going all the way out to Lorain County for cigarettes.

Like Reply



TPohorence

8 hours ago

@Dante Hicks @Cleveland is the Next Detroit They will if they work out there.

That sale will be made there and not on the corner of their block.

Like Reply



Dante Hicks

8 hours ago

@TPohorence @Dante Hicks @Cleveland is the Next Detroit Unlikely to see any increase in cigarette sales out in Lorain County. Maybe a slight bump in inner ring suburbs - maybe.

Like Reply



TPohorence

8 hours ago

@Dante Hicks @TPohorence @Cleveland and is the Next Detroit So that makes not talking to constituents OK? This is not a communist country. This is a democracy and as such, changes in or creation of LAWS needs public input.

Like Reply



Dante Hicks

8 hours ago

@TPohorence @Dante Hicks @Cleveland is the Next Detroit City Council meetings are public meetings. City Council representatives are elected by the people to legislate. Goodbye.

Like Reply



TPohorence

8 hours ago

@Dante

**Hicks @TPohorence @Clevel
and is the Next Detroit** You
sound like a Councilman who
doesn't have the stones to write
under your own name.

Like Reply



Dante Hicks

8 hours ago

@TPohorence @Dante

**Hicks @Cleveland is the Next
Detroit** Not on City Council.
Not even close.

1 Like Reply



Dante Hicks

8 hours ago

@TPohorence @Dante

**Hicks @Cleveland is the Next
Detroit** It sounds like this was a
public meeting.

**[http://wviz.ideastream.org/ne
ws/as-tobacco-use-rises-
cleveland-debates-new-
battle-plan](http://wviz.ideastream.org/news/as-tobacco-use-rises-cleveland-debates-new-battle-plan)**

Like Reply



TPohorence

8 hours ago

@Dante

Hicks @TPohorence @Clevel and is the Next Detroit That's a council meeting. It wasn't announced to the public. Why didn't we have meetings?

Like Reply



TPohorence

8 hours ago

@Dante

Hicks @TPohorence @Clevel and is the Next Detroit All those little old ladies are dying off. That's who keeps them in office.

Like Reply



Dante Hicks

8 hours ago

@TPohorence @Dante

Hicks @Cleveland is the Next Detroit Committee meetings are public record. If you cared, you would have been there.

Like Reply



TPohorence

8 hours ago



@Dante
Hicks @TPohorence @Clevel
and is the Next Detroit If I
card??

Like Reply



Dante Hicks 8 hours ago
@TPohorence @Dante
Hicks @Cleveland is the Next
Detroit What are you talking
about?

1 Like Reply

This comment has been deleted



Dante Hicks 8 hours ago
@TPohorence @Dante
Hicks @Cleveland is the Next
Detroit What about it dummy?

Like Reply



Motorhead 8 hours ago
@Cleveland is the Next Detroit How about simply
the neighboring suburbs? Unless I missed
something, the article only discussed the city of
Cleveland.

2 Like Reply



TPohorence

8 hours ago

@Motorhead @Cleveland is the Next Detroit That's the point, they are driving business out of Cleveland with this.

2 Like Reply



Dante Hicks

8 hours ago

@TPohorence @Motorhead @Cleveland is the Next Detroit No business will close because of this.

1 Like Reply



Motorhead

8 hours ago

@TPohorence @Motorhead @Cleveland is the Next Detroit But someone mentioned Lorain and other county or counties. I didn't think this was a Cuyahoga thing.

Sin tax for the pro sports teams in Cleve-o might take a hit, hehehe.

Like Reply



TPohorence

8 hours ago

@Motorhead @TPohorence @Cleveland is the Next

Detroit Our deep thinkers on Council probably didn't even give that a thought.

1  Like Reply

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