

# Protect Our Kids!



**Enforce Tobacco 21 Laws by Licensing Retailers**

## THE ISSUE:

Research shows that

**43.1%**

of 15-20 year old e-cigarette users were sold these products from a retail store, despite federal and state laws prohibiting these sales.

Kentucky is one of only 10 states that does not have a licensing program to enforce T-21 laws.



## THE SOLUTION:

The evidence-based, proven solution includes:

- Licensing all retailers that sell nicotine products
- Licensing fee sufficient to cover the cost of enforcement
- Annual compliance checks
- Escalating penalties when T-21 laws are broken



# DID YOU KNOW...



- **More students in Kentucky reported purchasing these products in stores (12%) compared to the national average (7.3%).**
- **High school students in KY who were sold e-cigarettes from a store increased from 2021 to 2023.**
- **Kentucky high school students' daily and frequent use of e-cigarettes increased from 2021 to 2023 despite the national rates steady or decreasing.**
- **Tobacco/nicotine use is responsible for over 8,000 deaths annually in Kentucky, highlighting the significant health impact of unregulated sales.**
- **Tobacco/nicotine use costs Kentucky over \$2.23 billion in healthcare expenditures each year, significantly burdening the state's economy and health systems.**
- **It also costs us \$3 billion in lost productivity...at a time when workforce capacity is a big concern.**
- **Kentucky has one of the highest densities of tobacco/nicotine retailers in the U.S. with about 3.6 retailers per 1,000 residents, compared to the national average of 1.2 per 1,000 residents.**
- **For every McDonalds in Kentucky, there are at least 20 tobacco and vape retailers.**
- **However, the exact number of retailers selling these products in Kentucky is unknown because there is no licensing law.**
- **Beauty salons, tattoo shops, massage therapists, X-ray operators and even air duct cleaners are required by law to obtain a license in Kentucky.**

**A tobacco licensing law would make it much easier to reach retailers with evidence-based training on how to properly check IDs and verify if they are genuine.**



For questions or more information, contact:  
Shannon.Baker@lung.org  
Ashlea.Christiansen@heart.org