

CBS New York

## **Suffolk County Health Department Backs Raising To Tobacco Purchase Age To 21**

### **Mayor Bloomberg Signed Measure This Week Raising Smoking Age**

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**HUNTINGTON, N.Y. (CBSNewYork)** – Just days after [Mayor Michael Bloomberg signed a bill banning the sale of tobacco products to anyone under age 21](#), a similar effort has launched in Suffolk County.

As WCBS 880 Long Island Bureau Chief Mike Xirinachs reported, the Suffolk County legislature is considering a similar measure to increase the age to purchase tobacco from 18 to 21.

“I think it’s a smart thing. I don’t think the kids should be smoking, we know how dangerous it is. I think it’s a great thing,” a former smoker told Xirinachs.

Other said they’re not convinced raising the tobacco age will make much difference, but added it’s still the right thing to do.

“It’s just like with alcohol, you know, if you want it, you get it. There’s always a way,” a man told Xirinachs.

The Suffolk County Board of Health has unanimously endorsed raising the tobacco purchase age to 21.

Legislator William Spencer, a physician, said he plans to draft a measure early next year.

When Bloomberg signed the measure Tuesday, New York became the first large city or state in the country to prohibit sales to young adults.

[City lawmakers approved raising the age in a 35-10 vote last month.](#)

If sellers violate the New York City law by selling to people under 21, they could be fined up to \$1,000 for each violation found in a single day and up to \$2,000 for a second violation. Retailers could also lose their license to sell tobacco products.

The measure applies to cigarettes, [electronic cigarettes](#), cigars and cigarillos and prohibits the sale of small cigars in packages of less than 20.

<http://newyork.cbslocal.com/2013/11/21/suffolk-county-health-department-backs-raising-to-tobacco-purchase-age-to-21/>