



Wayne A. Smith
President & CEO

February 28, 2019

The Honorable Bryan Townsend
Senate Majority Whip
411 Legislative Avenue
Dover, DE 19901

*Alfred I. duPont Hospital
for Children*
Roy Proujansky, MD,
Chief Executive of
Nemours Delaware
Valley Operations

Bayhealth
Terry Murphy,
President & CEO

Beebe Healthcare
Jeffrey M. Fried
President & CEO

*Christiana Care Health
System*
Janice E. Nevin, M.D.
MPH
President & CEO

Nanticoke Health Services
Steven A. Rose, RN, MN
President & CEO

Saint Francis Healthcare
Daniel Sinnott
President & CEO

*Delaware Healthcare
Association*
Wayne A. Smith
President & CEO

Dear Senator Townsend,

Thank you for introducing SB 25 to curb tobacco use in young adults by raising the tobacco sale age to 21 from 18. The Delaware Healthcare Association (DHA) supports this legislation and your efforts to reduce smoking, and smoking-related deaths in Delaware.

DHA represents hospitals and health care delivery systems in Delaware and advocates for policies that create an environment for enabling every Delawarean to be as healthy as they can be. Increasing the tobacco sale age aims to reduce the smoking rate and the incidence of smoking-related health conditions, producing a positive impact on the health of our state.

Smoking is the number one preventable cause of premature death and disease in the nation, killing more than 480,000 Americans, including 1,400 Delawareans annually. Smokers are more likely to develop heart disease, stroke, and lung cancer than non-smokers. Prevention is a key component in tackling any major health condition, including tobacco use. Since 95 percent of adults began smoking before age 21, there is a clear need to curb the initiation of tobacco use before they start down a potentially deadly path. Raising the tobacco sale age to 21 will reduce the number of teens and young adults that use tobacco, addressing the smoking problem before it begins. Studies have shown that such efforts may reduce the smoking rate by 12% and smoking-related deaths by 10% over time.

DHA is pleased to support SB 25 and looks forward to working with you and the members of the General Assembly to advance this important legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Wayne A. Smith'.

Wayne A. Smith
President & CEO