



MASSACHUSETTS MEDICAL SOCIETY

Every physician matters, each patient counts.

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF H.2562/S.1568
AN ACT TO CREATE A NICOTINE FREE GENERATION
BEFORE THE JOINT COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HEALTH
July 14, 2025**

The Massachusetts Medical Society (MMS) wishes to be recorded in support of H.2562/S.1568, *An Act to create a nicotine free generation.*

The MMS is a professional association of over 24,000 physicians, residents, and medical students across all clinical disciplines, organizations, and practice settings. The Medical Society is committed to advocating on behalf of patients, for a better health care system, and on behalf of physicians, to help them provide the best care possible. MMS policy supports establishing a “Nicotine Free Generation” in Massachusetts through the prohibition on sale of addictive nicotine products to anyone born after a chosen date. Passing H.2562/S.1568 would be a vital step forward in protecting future generations from the devastating health impacts of nicotine addiction and tobacco use.

As physicians, we see firsthand the human toll of tobacco-related disease: cancer, heart disease, stroke, respiratory illness, and countless lives lost prematurely. Despite decades of progress, tobacco remains the leading cause of preventable death in the United States.¹ Nicotine affects people of all ages but is most dangerous among adolescents and young adults because their brains are still developing, making them more susceptible to addiction.² Moreover, almost 90 percent of adult daily smokers started smoking by the age of 18.³ The evidence is clear: the longer we allow tobacco companies to target young people with addictive products, the more difficult it becomes to break the cycle of lifelong dependence and disease.

H.2562/S.1568 wisely addresses the sale of nicotine products, rather than its use or possession. It ensures that no current adult consumer loses access, while preventing the tobacco industry from recruiting new

¹ CDC. Burden of Cigarette Use in the U.S. <https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/campaign/tips/resources/data/cigarette-smoking-in-united-states.html#:~:text=Cigarette%20smoking%20remains%20the%20leading,5>

² Cleveland Clinic. Nicotine Dependence. <https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diseases/24482-nicotine-dependence>.

³ U.S. FDA. Youth and Tobacco. <https://www.fda.gov/tobacco-products/public-health-education/youth-and-tobacco#reference>

customers through younger generations. By implementing a birth-year-based restriction (those born on or after January 1, 2006), the law creates a generational firewall that is simple, enforceable, and effective. This legislation correctly acknowledges that the real culprit of harm is not the user, but the industry that aggressively markets a product that kills one-half to two-thirds of its long-term users.⁴

Massachusetts has a proud history of public health leadership in this area, from being one of the first states to limit tobacco sales to those over 21, to implementing comprehensive smoke-free air laws. H.2562/S.1568 builds on that legacy, aligning with growing national and international momentum. Already, thirteen towns in our Commonwealth have passed similar measures, and other jurisdictions from California to the United Kingdom are exploring this life-saving policy.⁵

We urge the legislature to seize this opportunity to advance a healthier, nicotine-free future for the next generation of Massachusetts residents. For these reasons, we respectfully request a favorable report on H.2562/S.1568. Thank you for your consideration of our comments.

⁴ Maritz GS, Mutemwa M. Tobacco smoking: patterns, health consequences for adults, and the long-term health of the offspring. *Glob J Health Sci.* 2012 May 30;4(4):62-75. doi: 10.5539/gjhs.v4n4p62. PMID: 22980343; PMCID: PMC4776909. <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC4776909/>

⁵ Action on Smoking Health. <https://ash.org/volunteers-kicking-industrys-butt-in-massachusetts/#:~:text=Democracy%20%E2%80%93%20Big%20Tobacco's%20Achilles%20Heel,1/1/2004>).