

Points to discuss if you SUPPORT the bill:

1. If you can't drink until you are 21 years old, why should you be able to smoke at 18? 21 is the appropriate age for a child to be mature enough to make decisions about their health and well being.
2. People who start smoking at a young age and continue to smoke as adults are at a higher risk for lung cancer and other diseases than people who don't start smoking until later in life.
3. Healthcare costs are out of control and people suffering from disease related to smoking require expensive healthcare.
4. Raising the smoking age to 21 reduces the likelihood of young drivers being distracted (by a cigarette) behind the wheel. Teen drivers are 3 times as likely to be in a fatal care crash as other drivers
(www.carfax.com/teen_driving/Teen_Safety_Tips.cfm).
5. When 18 yr olds are able to buy cigarettes, it is easier for younger teens to have access to cigarettes.

Points to discuss if you DON'T SUPPORT the bill:

1. Cigarette revenues are a large part of small business profits. If the smoking age is increased, fewer people will buy cigarettes and the owners of small convenience stores won't make as much money.
2. The current tax revenue we get from cigarette sales helps fund state health care programs. If less cigarettes are sold, there will be less money to fund state health care programs.
3. Customers who usually buy cigarettes at VT stores might go to NH and NY to buy cigarettes where they could still purchase cigarettes if they are 18 yrs old. This would take business out of state and would increase the likelihood of teen traffic accidents.
4. If the age is raised to 21, more teens may try to get tobacco illegally, increasing the crime rate among youth.
5. If 18 year olds are considered to be adults who can vote and go to war, they should be allowed to make their own decisions about smoking or not smoking. Aren't we taking away personal rights that they should have?