

Testimony in support of LD 210
Hannah Siladi
February 3, 2025

Senator Rotundo, Representative Gattine, Senator Grohoski, Representative Cloutier, and honorable members of the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs and the Joint Standing Committee on Taxation:

My name is Hannah Siladi, and I live in Portland. I am a public health professional with 8 years of experience implementing preventative programming in the state. I am here testifying in favor of the tobacco tax increase included in LD 210.

The fact of the matter is that, according to the 2023 Maine Integrated Youth Health Survey, nearly 1 in 5 Maine Highschool students are using a tobacco product. We also know that nine out of ten adults who smoke cigarettes daily, try their first cigarette by age 18 (U.S. CDC). I have a young child myself and the reality that she will be exposed to such harmful, life-altering products in a few short years gives me (and many others) great reason for concern.

We have seen in Maine that increasing the tobacco tax can reduce youth smoking rates, which is key because almost all tobacco use starts in adolescence. Maine has not raised the tobacco tax in 20 years, and this increase is long overdue. Taking this step will help break the cycle of addiction in Maine and protect the health of the future.

I urge you to vote Ought to Pass on the tobacco tax increase included in LD 210 to support Maine kids.