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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – MEDIA INQUIRIES**

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## **NYC Bans Sale of Tobacco and E-cigarettes to Under 21**

Today marks a historical day for New York City. Mayor Michael Bloomberg signs into law a bill that will raise the age to be sold tobacco and electronic smoking devices, to 21. Stores will no longer be able to sell these products to persons under age 21. The law does not ban the purchase of such products by persons under 21.

NYC is the largest city in the Nation to raise the age of sale to 21. The New York State and New Jersey legislatures both have introduced bills to raise the age of sale to 21.

Washington DC is following NYC's lead: On November 5, an ordinance was introduced to raise the age of sale to 21 for tobacco. Already, six communities in Massachusetts require persons be 21 to be sold tobacco: Arlington, Ashland (includes nicotine delivery products), Canton, Dover, Needham and Sharon.

"New York City is helping young people not start to smoke," states Karen Blumenfeld, Esq., Executive Director of Global Advisors on Smokefree Policy, a non-profit that encourages tobacco-free living and smokefree environments. 90% of all people who use tobacco-related products do so prior to age 21.

"Reducing access to tobacco and nicotine products for young adults will help them lead healthier lives and positively impact the health of those around them," says Blumenfeld. "We thank New York City and bill sponsor Councilman James Gennaro, for their leadership."

In August 2013, The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported that from 2011 to 2012, e-cigarette use and experimentation more than doubled amongst U.S. middle and high school students: high school students who reported ever using e-cigarettes increased from 4.7% to 10%, and 10% of high school students had tried e-cigarettes. In 2012, 1.78 million U.S. youth used e-cigarettes, and an estimated 160,000 middle and high school students who tried e-cigarettes had never smoked a cigarette.

<http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm6235a6.htm>