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New Sayreville Law Will Prohibit Persons Under 21 From Buying Cigarettes

By Meg Baker, September 12, 2014

Sayreville, New Jersey (My9NJ) - We all know smoking is bad for you, but shouldn't it be your choice to have a smoke or not? A new law in Sayreville, New Jersey will now limit the sale of cigarettes only to people 21 years-of-age or older.

While this law was passed with the intention to help reduce the number of teenage smokers, all its really done is anger convenience store owners and drive away customers.

"This is what I call 'feel good legislation' it allows the governing body to say, look what we did, and it actually does nothing," Executive Director of New Jersey Gasoline, C-store, and Automotive Association Sal Risalvato said.

The ordinance was introduced by councilman David McGill as a way to limit access to cigarettes for young people. However, gas station and convenience store owners think all it does is force customers to shop elsewhere.

"In many other areas of the town, all they would have to do is just cross the street and they will be able to get it, so it's not going to help anyone but the next door town," Sayreville convenience store owner Danny Jallo said.

Risalvato represents the small business owners, and he is frustrated with the new law because of the burden it places on the retailer.

"My members in Sayreville will lose sales and they will be encumbered with the burden of having to checking more ID's," Risalvato said.

He also added that this law takes the freedom to choose whether to smoke or not away from legal adults who are allowed to get married or go to war.

E-Cigarettes and smokeless tobacco are not covered by this law, so people under 21 can still buy them in Sayreville.

Retailers who are caught selling cigarettes to people under the age of 21 will be fined up to \$1,000.

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