

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

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REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, AUGUST 11, 2021

A RESOLUTION

1 Condemning tobacco companies' practice of targeted advertising
2 in low-income communities.

3 WHEREAS, Researchers estimate that 17.7% of adults in the
4 United States, or 58.1 million individuals, used tobacco
5 products in 2019; and

6 WHEREAS, Approximately 45.9 million individuals reported
7 smoking cigarettes in 2019, making cigarettes the most widely
8 used tobacco product in the United States; and

9 WHEREAS, Tobacco use among adults living below the Federal
10 poverty level (FPL) is considerably higher than among adults
11 living at or above the FPL; and

12 WHEREAS, Approximately 40% of adults in the United States
13 living below the FPL used tobacco products in 2017; and

14 WHEREAS, Tobacco use among adults decreases as they move
15 farther from poverty, as less than one-fourth of adults who earn
16 200% or more above the FPL reportedly used tobacco products in
17 2017; and

1 WHEREAS, There is a long and documented history of tobacco
2 companies utilizing targeted advertising in low-income
3 communities; and

4 WHEREAS, At different times over the past 60 years, tobacco
5 companies have attempted to appeal to low-income consumers by
6 handing out free cigarettes to children in public housing
7 developments and issuing tobacco coupons with food stamps; and

8 WHEREAS, Tobacco companies have historically targeted low-
9 income women through the distribution of discount coupons,
10 point-of-sale discounts, direct-mail coupons and development of
11 brands that are appealing to low-income women; and

12 WHEREAS, Research shows that there is a higher density of
13 tobacco retailers in low-income communities when compared to
14 other communities; and

15 WHEREAS, Storefront advertisements for tobacco products in
16 low-income communities tend to be larger, promote methanol
17 products, have a lower advertised price and are featured within
18 1,000 feet of a school; and

19 WHEREAS, The higher prevalence of tobacco use among adults
20 below the FPL disproportionately affects the health of low-
21 income communities; and

22 WHEREAS, Individuals living in low-income communities usually
23 have the least information available about the health hazards of
24 smoking, the fewest resources and social supports and often have
25 the least access to services to help them quit smoking; and

26 WHEREAS, Lower-income cigarette smokers suffer more from
27 diseases caused by smoking than smokers with higher incomes; and

28 WHEREAS, Populations in the most socioeconomically deprived
29 groups have a higher risk for lung cancer than the general
30 population; and

1 WHEREAS, Second-hand smoke exposure is higher among
2 individuals living below the FPL and individuals with less
3 education; and

4 WHEREAS, Adults who live below the FPL often have less
5 success when attempting to quit smoking cigarettes compared to
6 adults who live at or above the FPL; and

7 WHEREAS, Tobacco companies' targeted advertising in low-
8 income communities has likely contributed to the higher use of
9 cigarettes and other tobacco products in low-income communities;
10 and

11 WHEREAS, Tobacco companies' targeted advertising in low-
12 income communities may make it more difficult for low-income
13 individuals to quit smoking cigarettes and quit using other
14 tobacco products; and

15 WHEREAS, While marketing for any product includes
16 advertisements based on demographics, tobacco companies'
17 targeted advertising in low-income communities has contributed
18 toward significant health disparities that further impact
19 communities already hindered by social and economic inequality;
20 and

21 WHEREAS, The World Health Organization has found that tobacco
22 use and poverty are inextricably linked worldwide; and

23 WHEREAS, Several studies have shown that, in the poorest
24 households in many low-income countries, spending on tobacco
25 products often represents more than 10% of total household
26 expenditure; and

27 WHEREAS, The practice of targeting low-income communities
28 with tobacco advertisements has been detrimental to the overall
29 health and well-being of those communities; therefore be it

30 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives condemn tobacco

1 companies' practice of targeted advertising in low-income
2 communities; and be it further

3 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives support
4 initiatives to educate low-income Pennsylvanians on the health
5 risks associated with tobacco use and encourage the utilization
6 of public and private resources to assist individuals seeking to
7 quit tobacco use.