



*MDDCSAM is the Maryland state chapter of the American Society of Addiction Medicine whose members are physicians and other health providers who treat people with substance use disorders.*

## **Senate Bill 220**

### **FAVORABLE**

Senate Finance Committee      Hearing: January 30, 2024

In 2019, federal legislation eliminated the exemption to the prohibition of tobacco sales to people under age 21. This bill will bring Maryland in alignment with federal law, and address confusion among retailers that has resulted.

Also, eliminating this exemption is a simple but powerful step that will prevent tobacco addiction and its long-term complications in these individuals, who deserve to have their health preserved as much as others in their age group.

Historically, smoking rates have been high among those serving in the military. For many decades, Veterans Administration hospitals have been known for a high proportion of patients with tobacco-caused diseases such as chronic lung disease, heart disease, cancer in various organs, stroke, peripheral vascular disease, amputations, and other manifestations of atherosclerosis.

Thank you for your support,

Joseph A. Adams, MD, FASAM  
Board certified in addiction medicine and internal medicine  
Public Policy Committee