RESOLUTION NO. 2015 – 03
MIDDLE-BROOK REGIONAL HEALTH COMMISSION
COUNTY OF SOMERSET, STATE OF NEW JERSEY

RESOLUTION ENCOURAGING THE STATE TO RAISE THE TOBACCO PURCHASING AGE TO 21

WHEREAS, forty-two million Americans still smoke, resulting in tobacco use being responsible for nearly one in five deaths in the U.S.; and

WHEREAS, because cigarette smoking and tobacco use are acquired behaviors, smoking is one of the most preventable causes of death in the U.S.; and

WHEREAS, eighteen percent of adults place themselves and their families at risk for major and preventable health problems through tobacco use; and

WHEREAS, eighty-five percent of daily smokers start smoking before age twenty-one; and

WHEREAS, there is an alarming increase in the use of e-cigarettes among teenagers and young adults; and

WHEREAS, the Institute of Medicine found that increasing the tobacco purchasing age to 21 would reduce smoking by twelve percent, resulting in 249,000 fewer premature deaths, 45,000 fewer lung cancer deaths, 4.2 million fewer total years of life lost among those born between 2000 and 2019, and fewer infants born prematurely; and

WHEREAS, the journal, Tobacco Control, reports that underage smoking plummeted by nearly fifty percent after Needham, MA became the first municipality in the nation to raise the tobacco purchasing age to twenty-one; and

WHEREAS, the American Medical Association, the American Academy of Pediatrics, and many others endorse raising the tobacco purchasing age to 21; and

WHEREAS, municipalities across the country, including New York City and approximately twelve New Jersey municipalities have raised the tobacco purchasing age to twenty one; and

WHEREAS, Hawaii is the first state in the nation to raise the tobacco purchasing age to twenty-one and other states, including California, have introduced similar legislation; and

WHEREAS, on June 30, 2014 the New Jersey State Senate passed a bill raising the tobacco purchasing age to 21; and
WHEREAS, the New Jersey State Assembly still has not yet passed the companion bill to raise the tobacco purchasing age, as the bill is still pending before the Assembly Health and Senior Services Committee;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Middle-Brook Regional Health Commission that we hereby request that the New Jersey State Assembly pass bill A3254 raising the tobacco purchasing age to 21, and establishing New Jersey as a public health leader in reducing underage smoking and preventable deaths.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that upon passage by the New Jersey State Legislature that the Middle-Brook Regional Health Commission urges the Governor to sign the bill into law promptly.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the Office of the Governor of the State of New Jersey, the State Legislators representing the municipalities of the Middle-Brook Regional Health Commission, the Speaker of the New Jersey General Assembly, the President of the New Jersey State Senate, and the Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Health.

CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that a resolution, of which the foregoing is a true copy, was duly adopted by the Middle-Brook Regional Health Commission at its Public Meeting held November 23, 2015.

Dr. Jon Fourre, Commission President

Kevin G. Sumner, Health Officer

Introduced:

Adopted: