



PUBLIC PETITION NO.

PE01456

Name of petitioner

Scott Anderson

Petition title

Introduction of an individual licence to purchase tobacco products

Petition summary

Calling on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to take a further step towards a smoking-free Scotland by introducing a requirement for individuals to obtain a renewable licence to allow them to purchase tobacco products.

Action taken to resolve issues of concern before submitting the petition

This scheme has not been raised directly at a local level as the scheme would require to be implemented on a national basis to work. As the issue is clearly one which requires cross-party support, I would prefer that it is raised independently from the outset.

Petition background information

Scotland has a shocking health record for smoking-related illness, but has already shown itself to be brave enough to take early steps to reduce these health risks. We can lead the world again with this scheme whilst at the same protecting tourism and avoiding the worst black market effects that any total prohibition would inevitably lead to.

Such a licence should expire every three years, require the payment of a fee of around £50 to obtain one and not be issued without the individual having a health check and counselling.

This scheme would deter young people from starting to smoke and would make existing smokers re-consider their choice regularly and from an informed basis as they can see health changes every three years. It would raise a small amount of revenue directly from a higher risk group in terms of costs to the NHS and would, over a few generations, reduce the costs greatly to the NHS for treating smoking-related illness by further reducing the number of smokers in the country.

The scheme should have a minimum age of 18 in the first instance, rising to 21 by increasing the minimum age by one year every three years for the first nine years of operation and, upon introduction should be mandatory for anyone aged under 50 who

wishes to be able to purchase tobacco products. the upper age limit requirement should similarly increase, but by three years every year for the first ten years of operation at which point the upper age limit should be removed.

Any temporary visitors to the country would be able to purchase a short-term (six month) licence for a fee of around £20, at relevant entry points such as airports, hotels, etc. without the need for counselling and health checks, but details should be held on a national database and a health check required for any renewal.

In addition, retailers should not be allowed to sell more than 5 packs of tobacco products to any individual in a single purchase.

Whilst there may be a possibility of some black marketeering, the overall health - promoting effects and health benefits would still make the scheme worthwhile.

Reducing the likelihood of young people ever starting will reduce the likely success of black marketeers.

Unique web address

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/GettingInvolved/Petitions/licencetopurchasetobacco>

Related information for petition

Do you wish your petition to be hosted on the Parliament's website to collect signatures online?

YES

How many signatures have you collected so far?

0

Closing date for collecting signatures online

16 / 11 / 2012

Comments to stimulate online discussion

Can we take a further bold step towards a smoke-free Scotland?

Out-and-out prohibition will never work and a licence to purchase scheme places some of the costs of health care directly at the door of smokers themselves whilst at the same time providing support services and regular health checks for those who do continue to smoke.