

National Alliance for Hispanic Health Praises Chicago City Council Move to Raise Tobacco-Buying Age to 21

WASHINGTON, March 16, 2016 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- "Today, Chicago joined 135 cities and the State of Hawaii in a national movement to realize a smoke-free generation by raising the tobacco buying age to twenty-one. They have set an example for the nation of local government standing up to Big Tobacco," said Jane L. Delgado, President and CEO of the National Alliance for Hispanic Health (the Alliance), the nation's leading Hispanic health advocacy group.

The Chicago ordinance raising the smoking age from 18 to 21 passed the City Council by a decisive 35 to 10 vote. "Economic interests should not take precedence over the welfare of Chicago's youth. Today's vote will help families protect the health of their children today and in the future," said Esther E. Sciammarella, Executive Director of the Chicago Hispanic Health Coalition, an Alliance member and regional leader of the Alliance's *Nuestras Voces* (Our Voices) network on tobacco cessation and cancer awareness. After the vote, Chicago City Mayor Rahm Emanuel tweeted, "Chicago is choosing kids over big tobacco."

A March 2015 report from the Institute of Medicine concluded that raising the tobacco sale age to 21 will have a substantial impact on public health and save lives. Indeed, data from the National Survey on Drug Use and Health show that 95% of adult smokers begin smoking before they turn twenty-one. According to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) data, one in five (20.9%) of Hispanics in the U.S. reported using tobacco, and National Survey on Drug Use and Health data highlight that U.S. born Hispanics are having a greater incidence of smoking than those who are foreign-born.

Dr. Delgado, concluded "If you need support talking to your children about not smoking or you or a loved one needs help quitting, we are here to help. Call our toll-free Su Familia Helpine at 1-866-783-2645. Together we can build a healthier and smoke-free America."

About the National Alliance for Hispanic Health (The Alliance)

The Alliance is the nation's foremost science-based source of information and trusted advocate for the health of Hispanics in the United States with a mission to achieve the best health outcomes for all. For more information visit us www.hispanichealth.org.

***Nuestras Voces* (Our Voices)**

Nuestras Voces is a national network of over 100 organizations working for a tobacco-free world and to eliminate disparities in cancer prevention and treatment services. You can be part of this effort being led by the National Alliance for Hispanic Health! Join us at www.nuestrasvoces.org/join.