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**AB-2021 Crimes: selling or furnishing tobacco or related products and paraphernalia to underage persons. (2023-2024)**

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**Assembly Bill No. 2021**

**CHAPTER 371**

An act to amend Section 308 of the Penal Code, relating to crimes.

[ Approved by Governor September 22, 2024. Filed with Secretary of State September 22, 2024. ]

**LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST**

AB 2021, Bauer-Kahan. Crimes: selling or furnishing tobacco or related products and paraphernalia to underage persons.

Existing law prohibits the sale or furnishing of tobacco or tobacco products or paraphernalia, as specified, to a person who is under 21 years of age. Under existing law, a violation of this prohibition is punishable by a fine of \$200 for the first offense, \$500 for the 2nd offense, and \$1,000 for the 3rd offense, either as a misdemeanor or by a civil action, as specified.

This bill would create a separate fine of \$500 for the first offense, \$1,000 for the 2nd offense, and \$5,000 for any subsequent offense for firms, corporations, businesses, retailers, or wholesalers, who violate this prohibition.

Vote: majority Appropriation: no Fiscal Committee: yes Local Program: no

**THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:**

**SECTION 1.** Section 308 of the Penal Code is amended to read:

**308.** (a) (1) (A) (i) A person who knowingly or under circumstances in which it has knowledge, or should otherwise have grounds for knowledge, sells, gives, or in any way furnishes to another person who is under 21 years of age any tobacco, cigarette, cigarette papers, or blunt wraps, or any other preparation of tobacco, or any other instrument or paraphernalia that is designed for the smoking or ingestion of tobacco, tobacco products, or any controlled substance, is subject to either a criminal action for a misdemeanor or a civil action brought by a city attorney, a county counsel, or a district attorney, punishable by a fine of two hundred dollars (\$200) for the first offense, five hundred dollars (\$500) for the second offense, and one thousand dollars (\$1,000) for the third offense.

(ii) A firm, corporation, business, retailer, or wholesaler that under the circumstances described in clause (i) sells, gives, or in any way furnishes to another person who is under 21 years of age a product specified in clause (i) is subject to either a criminal action for a misdemeanor or a civil action brought by a city attorney, a county counsel, or a district attorney, punishable by a fine of five hundred dollars (\$500) for the first offense, one thousand dollars (\$1,000) for the second offense, and five thousand dollars (\$5,000) for any subsequent offense.

(iii) This subparagraph does not apply to the sale, giving, or furnishing of any of the products specified in clause (i) to active duty military personnel who are 18 years of age or older. An identification card issued by the United States Armed

Forces shall be used as proof of age for this purpose.

(B) Notwithstanding Section 1464 or any other law, 25 percent of each civil and criminal penalty collected pursuant to this subdivision shall be paid to the office of the city attorney, county counsel, or district attorney, whoever is responsible for bringing the successful action.

(C) Proof that a defendant, or their employee or agent, demanded, was shown, and reasonably relied upon evidence of majority shall be a defense to any action brought pursuant to this subdivision. Evidence of majority of a person is a facsimile of, or a reasonable likeness of, a document issued by a federal, state, county, or municipal government, or subdivision or agency thereof, including, but not limited to, a motor vehicle operator's license, a registration certificate issued under the federal Military Selective Service Act (50 U.S.C. Sec. 3801 et seq.), or an identification card issued to a member of the Armed Forces.

(D) For purposes of this section, the person liable for selling or furnishing tobacco products to persons under 21 years of age by a tobacco vending machine shall be the person authorizing the installation or placement of the tobacco vending machine upon premises they manage or otherwise control and under circumstances in which they have knowledge, or should otherwise have grounds for knowledge, that the tobacco vending machine will be utilized by persons under 21 years of age.

(2) For purposes of this section, "blunt wraps" means cigar papers or cigar wrappers of all types that are designed for smoking or ingestion of tobacco products and contain less than 50 percent tobacco.

(b) A person, firm, or corporation that sells, or deals in tobacco or any preparation of tobacco, shall post conspicuously and keep so posted in their place of business at each point of purchase the notice required pursuant to subdivision (b) of Section 22952 of the Business and Professions Code, and a person failing to do so shall, upon conviction, be punished by a fine of fifty dollars (\$50) for the first offense, one hundred dollars (\$100) for the second offense, two hundred fifty dollars (\$250) for the third offense, and five hundred dollars (\$500) for the fourth offense and each subsequent violation of this provision, or by imprisonment in a county jail not exceeding 30 days.

(c) For purposes of determining the liability of persons, firms, or corporations controlling franchises or business operations in multiple locations for the second and subsequent violations of this section, each individual franchise or business location shall be deemed a separate entity.

(d) It is the Legislature's intent to regulate the subject matter of this section. As a result, a city, county, or city and county shall not adopt any ordinance or regulation inconsistent with this section.

(e) For purposes of this section, "smoking" has the same meaning as in subdivision (c) of Section 22950.5 of the Business and Professions Code.

(f) For purposes of this section, "tobacco products" means a product or device as defined in subdivision (d) of Section 22950.5 of the Business and Professions Code.