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## **Governor Doyle Announces Significant Decrease in Tobacco Sales to Wisconsin Minors**

MADISON – Governor Jim Doyle today announced a significant decrease in tobacco sales to Wisconsin minors. The state's 2009 Synar sales compliance survey, which determines the number of retail outlets that are selling tobacco illegally to minors, shows a noncompliance rate of 5.7 percent—20 percent lower than the 2008 rate of 7.2 percent.

"In Wisconsin, we are working hard to protect our kids from the scourge of tobacco," Governor Doyle said. "Our state has a long history of preventing youth tobacco sales and I'm pleased our efforts are paying off."

Governor Doyle also thanked retailers for helping keep tobacco out of the hands of minors and for their dedication to protecting young people from tobacco's harmful effects.

The annual Synar survey randomly selects retail outlets from across the state to determine a reliable estimate of the rate of illegal tobacco sales to minors. Named after the Congressman who sponsored the federal legislation, the Synar legislation requires all states to monitor and reduce the rate of illegal tobacco sales to minors at retail establishments.

Wisconsin's federally established target rate for retail tobacco sales to minors is 20 percent, and failure to meet this rate can result in a 40 percent cut in a state's federal block grant funds for substance abuse prevention and treatment. In Wisconsin, this would amount to approximately \$10 million in lost funds. 2009 marks the seventh straight year that Wisconsin has been below the target rate of 20 percent.

The state's Wisconsin Wins program provides the framework for reducing tobacco sales to youth. The program is managed by the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS), which works with local partners, including health departments and other local agencies, to conduct investigations to determine retailer compliance. In addition to providing education and media and community outreach, Wisconsin Wins also offers free online retailer training at [www.smokecheck.org](http://www.smokecheck.org).

"Limiting youth access to tobacco products means our young people will be healthier," said DHS Secretary Karen Timberlake. "We're very proud of all the Wisconsin Wins program has accomplished during the last eight years."

For more information about the Synar report and tobacco control efforts in Wisconsin, please visit <http://dhfs.wisconsin.gov/tobacco>.

Governor Doyle has fought the scourge of tobacco his entire career. In May, the Governor signed legislation to make public places, including restaurants, taverns, and other indoor workplaces, smokefree in July 2010.