

Chair Burdick and members of the committee

I'm Raquel Bournhonesque, Co-Director of Upstream Public Health an organization dedicated to improving the health of all Oregonians.

My testimony today –is a quick Q&A.

1. Question: What industry forces Oregonians to pay over 1 billion dollars in healthcare costs each year yet is trying to block a tobacco tax and the repeal of preemption?

Answer? Tobacco

2. Question - What industry claims that this debate is about personal choice but has been convicted of racketeering and manipulates nicotine levels to keep people addicted?

Tobacco

3. Question: What industry declares tobacco taxes regressive, yet does everything they can to keep low-income people addicted?

Answer: Again, Tobacco

We know the goals of the tobacco industry. That's hardly been a secret. However, your job and my job are to do what is best for the residents of Oregon. Together we can stem the tide.

1. Question: What state has double the rate of smoking during pregnancy compared to CA?

Answer? Oregon

2. In what state do kids smoke over 7 million packs of cigarettes every year?

A: Again, Oregon

And for the last question.

Who has the opportunity to stand up for what's right – for Oregonian's health and declare - we want to repeal preemption and give local communities the power to tax cigarettes because its good for health and good for the economy?

The good news is - this committee has the power

Ending:

The train is clearly moving on this issue. And let's not forget that the Oregon legislature has made great progress reducing tobacco use. This committee knows what works and how to get things done. Picture an Oregon free of the death and disease due to tobacco. The bill before you today is an important step in achieving that common goal.