



Oregon Latino Health Coalition
240 N Broadway Ste. 215
Portland, OR 97227

March 27, 2013

Dear Chair Barnhart and Members of the House Revenue Committee:

I am writing to express my support for HB 2870, which removes prohibition against imposition of taxes by county on cigarettes and tobacco products. As the Executive Director of the Oregon Latino Health Coalition, I have a vested interest in serving and protecting our community. We are dedicated to promoting health and wellness and reducing Latino health disparities.

Tobacco use remains the leading cause of preventable death in this country. Reducing use and exposure to tobacco is an issue of equity and a critical determinant of health disparities. Tobacco products are unfairly and disproportionately marketed and sold in low-income communities and communities of color. This, in turn, hurts our neighbors and families by causing chronic health problems and premature death. Studies confirm that tobacco industry differentially appeals to people with the lowest income and education through point of sale advertising and there is more tobacco advertising in predominately racially diverse and low-income neighborhoods. In particular, marketing to Hispanics and American Indians/Alaska Natives has included advertising and promotion of cigarette brands with names such as Rio, Dorado, and American Spirit.

The Oregon Latino Health Coalition supports statewide policies to reduce disparities within Latino communities by identifying and addressing health disparities faced by Latinos, as well as reviewing and supporting policies that improve Latino wellness. Communities are in crisis and need to be able to consider all tools to meet local needs. With Latinos being one of the largest and rapidly growing ethnic group in the state of Oregon, lifting preemption would provide another tool for our leaders to use to have population reach and impact while addressing the disproportionate use of and disease caused by tobacco.

Sincerely,

Albert Moreno
Executive Director
Oregon Latino Health Coalition

**FROM THE DESK OF
REP. MITCH GREENLICK**