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**STATE REPRESENTATIVE**  
DISTRICT 15

## **HB 4073 – Electronic Cigarettes to Minors**

February 5, 2014

Representative Carolyn Tomei  
Chair House Committee on Human Services & Housing  
800 Court Street N.  
Salem, OR 97301

Madam Chair and Committee Members,

As you may be aware, last year, the State of Washington along with 12 other states passed legislation that would prevent the sales of Electronic Cigarettes known as e-cigarettes to minors. Through HB 4073, Oregon would join 28 other states that have passed legislation incorporating e-cigarettes into youth prevention laws.

### So what are E-Cigarettes?

E-Cigarettes are a battery-operated product designed to deliver nicotine to the user by heating liquid nicotine, derived from tobacco plants, along with flavors and other chemicals, into a vapor that the user inhales. As reported by the U.S. Surgeon General and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the nicotine found in e-cigarettes is highly addictive, has immediate biochemical effects on the brain and body at any dosage, and is toxic in high doses.

E-Cigarette sales are growing at an alarming rate across the Nation. Sales have doubled every year since 2008. Sales in 2013 are now accelerating even faster and projected to reach \$1.7 billion. At the same time, the cost has dropped making the product more affordable, and thus more attractive to young people. Unlike traditional tobacco products, there are no federal age restrictions that prohibit the purchase or sale of e-cigarettes, nor is there any advertising restrictions concerning the product.

### Why do E-Cigarettes appeal to youth?

E-cigarettes contain a variety of fruit and candy flavors, such as gummy bear, cherry, bubble gum and chocolate...flavors that appeal to youth. What is interesting, the Food & Drug Administration has banned such flavors from cigarettes! Currently, e-cigarettes and refills of liquid nicotine solution used with e-cigarettes can easily be ordered online without age verification. By intentional use e-cigarettes and liquid nicotine refills can deliver dangerously high doses of liquid nicotine to youth.

Additionally, the manufacturers such as eJuiceMonkeys.com and Magic Puff City E-cigarettes use cartoons to sell their product. Unfortunately, cartoon characters appeal to youth.

Information collected from the 2011 and 2012 National Youth Tobacco Surveys (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) show that e-cigarette use among students doubled in the last year. The surveys reveal that one in 10 high school students reported they had tried an e-cigarette in the last year...up from one in 20 in 2011, and 1.8 million middle and high school students said they had tried an e-cigarette in 2012.

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