

 Lane
Community College SM

Office of the President

January 31, 2014

From the Desk of
Rep. Phil Barnhart

The Honorable Phil Barnhart
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court St NE, H-383
Salem, OR 97301-4056

Dear Representative Barnhart:

Thank you for holding your recent town hall meeting at Lane Community College. I am writing to follow up with you about the issue of electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes), which was brought up during the meeting and is an issue we are currently dealing with at the college.

Lane became a tobacco-free campus in 2010, part of our continuing efforts to create the best learning environment for our students as well as a healthy and sustainable working environment for our employees. Currently, the use of tobacco products is only allowed in four designated areas in parking lots on the outer perimeter of campus. This policy has proven to be very popular among students and staff, including both tobacco-users and non-users, and it has enjoyed nearly complete compliance since its implementation.

The recent introduction and growth in popularity of e-cigarettes has created confusion among many students as to whether our campus policy applies also to e-cigarettes. Students, who often cite claims from advertisements they see that e-cigarettes are "safe," "only water vapor," and "can be used anywhere," have been found using e-cigarettes throughout campus, including inside buildings and classroom space. Some e-cigarette users use a nicotine-free liquid, while others choose a liquid with nicotine and/or other chemicals. We have also encountered a small number of users who use the product for the consumption of illegal drugs. All of this, combined with the lack of a clear policy from the state and federal governments, makes enforcement of a campus policy challenging.

Lane's Tobacco-Free Campus Committee is currently reviewing the issue of e-cigarettes on campus and determining what steps, if any, the college should take to guarantee a policy that works in the best interest of all students and employees. Thank you for your attention to this issue, and I look forward to following the legislature's conversation about e-cigarettes in the upcoming session.

Sincerely,

Mary F. T. Spilde

Mary F.T. Spilde
President

Phil Barnhart