



# ASSOCIATION OF OREGON COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAMS

Addictions • Mental Health • Developmental Disabilities

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## Testimony in support of HB 2546 – Preventing Nicotine Addiction among Youth

To House Health Care Committee  
February 9, 2015

Dear Chair Greenlick and Members of the House Health Care  
Committee,

On behalf of the members of the Association of Oregon Community  
Mental Health Programs (AOCMHP), I would like to express strong  
support for HB 2546. Access to electronic cigarettes should be  
restricted to youth under the age of 18 and the use of electronic  
cigarettes should be prohibited in public places and in employment  
settings, including cannabinoids and other substances used in  
electronic cigarettes, just as tobacco products. We are also  
supportive of child resistant packaging of electronic cigarettes to  
prevent younger children from accidentally ingesting electronic  
cigarette substances.

As representatives of the community behavioral health system, we  
know that youth who smoke are much more likely to have an  
underlying behavioral health issue and they are using tobacco  
products, and now electronic cigarettes, to lower stress associated  
with trauma, anxiety, depression, and other problems. We support  
early intervention efforts with these youth to help them avoid using  
nicotine as a coping mechanism for stress.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in support  
of HB 2546.

Sincerely,

*Cherryl L. Ramirez*

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