



OREGON
Alliance
of Children's Programs

9 February 2015
House Health Care Committee

HB 2546 – E-Cigarettes
SUPPORT

Dear Chair Greenlick and Committee Members,

The Oregon Alliance of Children's Programs is a nonprofit association of providers focusing on children and families. We represent \$223 million in services for over 100,000 children. Further, our members have more than 5500 employees and pay \$152 million in payroll each year.

We know from scientific research that the most common early risk behavior in which children engage, is the use of nicotine products.

- **“From 2011-2012, electronic cigarette use doubled among middle and high school students.” (1)**

In 2014 the Alliance conducted the Center for Disease Control and Kaiser Permanente's ACE Study with nearly 800 of the children we serve.

The ACE Study is a survey of 10 Adverse Childhood Experiences (ie abuse, neglect, mental health or addiction in the household, divorce, parent in prison, etc). A score of 4 experiences is a trigger for increased likelihood of engaging in risk behaviors that create social ills and movement into adult chronic illnesses and early death.

- **“One area of study that has received substantial interest involves childhood adverse events. Experiencing childhood sexual and physical abuse and witnessing violence in the home or community substantially increase the risk of tobacco initiation and dependence.” (2)**
- **The “prevalence of adverse childhood experiences... are associated with smoking.” (2)**
- **“Early age of onset of cigarette use was the strongest correlate of the number of health risk behaviors in which young adolescents engaged.” (3)**

Our members are working hard to disengage children and youth from nicotine use because of their especially vulnerable circumstances. Sixty-eight percent of the children in our care have an ACE score of 5 or more. The first step is to reduce or avoid risk behaviors, specifically tobacco and nicotine use.

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We need your help to begin untangling the trauma of adverse childhood experiences. The legal and unrestricted access and use of electronic cigarettes creates what will become irreparable damage to their future health, and to the overall wellbeing of this state.

Further, these children are poised to become the next “high fliers,” 20% of citizens who will use 80% of tax payer dollars in health care -- and diminish the possibility of every achieving healthcare transformation goals because of the overwhelming expense for their care.

Please pass HB 2546.
Thank you,

Janet Arenz, Executive Director

- (1) CDC, Control and Prevention Feb 14, 2014
- (2) CDC, Preventing Chronic Disease Sept 19, 2013
- (3) The Relationship Between Early Age of Onset of Initial Substance Use and Engaging in Multiple Health Risk Behaviors Among Young Adolescents, *Arch Pediatric Adolescent Medicine* 1999

