



Deborah Kafoury Multnomah County Chair

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Senate Health Care and Human Services Committee

Letter from Multnomah County Chair Deborah Kafoury in Support of HB 2546

Dear Chair Monnes Anderson and Members of the Senate Health Care and Human Services Committee,

I write in support of HB 2546A, legislation to protect youth from exposure to e-cigarette products and align e-cigarettes and vaping products with cigarette use in the Indoor Clean Air Act.

The Multnomah County Board of Commissioners passed similar legislation to HB 2546A on March 5, 2015, as this measure passed out of the House. We believe that this legislation is crucial to protecting youth from e-cigarettes.

E-cigarettes are a new product, yet they are already widely sold throughout Multnomah County. They are unregulated and there are no safety standards for what is in them, how they are packaged, who can buy them and where they can be used.

Youth are being targeted in advertising for these products. E-cigarettes are often placed next to the candy with flavors that are especially tempting to kids and in fact contain the exact same flavorings as many popular candies. Sadly, calls to Poison Control have increased in Oregon and nationwide after children swallowed vaping liquid, and one child in New York died.

We've heard from the Madison High School Rebels that kids use these at school and they see them frequently. We also know that nicotine, a primary ingredient of most e-cigarettes and vaping liquid, is not healthy and can interfere with brain development. There are no long-term studies on the health impacts of e-cigarettes because they haven't been around long enough.

Teen cigarette use has dropped dramatically over the last few decades. But vape pens and e-cigarettes are being used in public spaces, at malls, on sports fields, in playgrounds and these products are renormalizing public smoking. As the Rebels told us, kids perceive them as safe because they are absolutely legal for them to buy and use.

I hope that you will support this legislation as it came out of the House.

Sincerely,

Deborah Kafoury