To: SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE
From: KASANDRA GRIFFIN, UPSTREAM PUBLIC HEALTH
Date: APRIL 15, 2015
Re: SB 732
           RE. AGE LIMITS ON TOBACCO AND INHALANT PRODUCTS

Chair Prozanski and Members of the Committee,

Upstream Public Health supports SB 732, to set an age limit of 21 for the sale or use of tobacco or inhalant products.

•   Tobacco use is the leading cause of preventable deaths in the United States overall and in Oregon in particular. The key word in that sentence is **preventable**: diseases caused by tobacco use, such as cancer, heart disease and respiratory disease, are preventable. Upstream Public Health supports the implementation of comprehensive policies aimed at closing the channels that permit youth to access or use tobacco and nicotine products.

•   Increasing the minimum legal age for tobacco and inhalant products to 21 would certainly reduce youth's access to these harmful products and would send a clear message that these products are as dangerous as other regulated substances.

•   We are excited to see the inhalant delivery systems included in this legislation, because we think it is very important to have age limits for all forms of tobacco and nicotine products, *especially* forms that target kids with fruit and candy flavors.

•   Oregon currently leads the nation in illegal tobacco sales to minors. We are excited by this move to raise the legal age limit for acquiring traditional tobacco products, and to establish an age limit for other nicotine products. Hopefully the experience that vendors have with assessing who is 21 will transfer to these products and help reduce sales illegal sales to minors.

•   We urge you to pass HB 732 *and also* support legislation creating a tobacco and nicotine retail licensing system (currently proposed through SB 633 amendments), in order to fully address Oregon's problem with sales of tobacco and nicotine products to youth.

Thank you for the consideration and for your service,

Kasandra Griffin
Policy Manager for Food and School Health
Upstream Public Health