

DATE: May 19, 2015
TO: Senate Committee on Finance and Revenue
FROM: Stacy Michaelson, Association of Oregon Counties
SUBJECT: SB 663-A

Chair Has, Members of the Committee,

For the record, I am Stacy Michaelson, Health and Human Services Policy Manager for the Association of Oregon Counties (AOC). AOC represents the collective voice of county governments across Oregon. Thank you for the opportunity today to testify on SB 663-A.

AOC supports the aim of this bill to license tobacco retailers. As you know, counties are the local public health authorities in our state, and tobacco cessation and prevention is a major component of that work. As one of a handful of states that do not license tobacco retailers, this is a step in the right direction. Just as we monitor retailers of other controlled substances, so too should we regulate and monitor those who sell tobacco.

However, I want to be on the record as opposing the carve-out that has been created in this bill for sampling in vape shops. As a matter of AOC principle, we are also opposed to the preemptive language in this version of the bill. As the local public health authority, this preemption removes one potential tool from counties toolbox, which is concerning as we have seen counties begin to discuss more regulatory efforts in this area.

In summation, we believe the aim of this bill is worthwhile, but the bill would be made better some substantive changes that would be in line with strong tobacco regulation. Thank you.