



3 February 2016

Representative Mitch Greenlick, Chair
Members of the House Health Care Committee
900 Court Street NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

Chair Greenlick and Representatives,

Children First for Oregon advocates for long-term, systemic change by advocating for policies and programs that keep children healthy and safe and strengthen families. We write in support of HB 4062 because e-cigarettes pose a very real risk to children and we must use all available options to prevent nicotine addiction in Oregon's kids.

While nationally e-cigarette use has surpassed all other tobacco products among middle and high school students¹, here in Oregon, the facts are startling: e-cigarette usage among high school students has tripled since 2013. We know that high school kids who used e-cigarettes were almost twice as likely as non-users to start smoking² and that, according to the Surgeon General, nearly 9 out of 10 smokers began smoking before 18. Given that studies have shown that youth are two to three times more price-responsive than the general population³, it only makes sense the imposing a tax on e-cigarettes can help to dissuade kids from becoming addicted to nicotine.

Additionally, you have, or soon will have, a copy of the 2016 Children's Agenda produced by United for Kids. United for Kids participants share a commitment to public policy changes and shared investments that benefit the health, safety, economic security and education of Oregon's children. Eight organizations belonging to United for Kids support these bills, which will help to protect kids from nicotine addiction and its long-term health effects.

We ask you to join us in promoting the good health of Oregon's children and pass HB 4062.

Sincerely,

Tonia Hunt, Executive Director

¹ E-Cigarette use triples among middle and high school students in just one year. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

² Primack B, et al. 2015. Progression to traditional cigarette smoking after electronic cigarette use among US adolescents and young adults. JAMA Pediatrics.

³ International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health. 2011 Nov; 8(11): 4118–4139.