



MEMORANDUM

To: Rep. Mitch Greenlick, Chair, House Health Care Committee
Rep. Rob Nosse, Vice-Chair, House Health Care Committee
Rep. Cedric Hayden, Vice Chair, House Health Care Committee
Members of the House Health Care Committee

From: Courtni Dresser, OMA Government Relations

Date: February 3, 2016

Re: HB 4062

Chair Greenlick, members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit a statement on HB 4062.

The OMA has long supported taxes on tobacco products because we know that raising the price of tobacco helps people quit and more importantly, keeps young people from ever starting. In the last decade, a new and explosive market has developed in response to the decreasing number of adult smokers- that of e-cigarettes and personal inhalant devices. Although marketed as safe alternatives to tobacco products, recent studies conclude that there are numerous cancer causing chemicals within the vapor. This is a concern, especially as we see the number of teens and young adults using these products on the rise.

In a recent JAMA Pediatrics research article, the authors concluded that teens and young adults who use e-cigarette products, were more likely to progress to traditional tobacco cigarettes.¹ Due to the lack of regulation on the marketing of these products, teens and young adults are modeling their behavior based on the marketing and media aimed at adults. They are further enticed by the numerous flavors and devices that are targeted to appeal to their tastes.

The OMA supports HB 4062 to help protect young adults from products that can cause them harm and to tax e-cigarettes which will make the product much less attractive to younger people with less disposable income.

Thank you once again for the opportunity to address the committee on this topic.

¹ Primack B, et al. 2015. Progression to traditional cigarette smoking after electronic cigarette use among US adolescents and young adults. JAMA Pediatrics.