



MEMORANDUM

To: Rep. Mitch Greenlick, Chair, House Health Care Committee
Rep. Phil Barnhart, Chair, House Revenue Committee
Members of the House Health Care Committee
Members of the House Revenue Committee

From: Courtni Dresser, OMA
Julie Hanna, OHSU

Date: February 24, 2016

Re: Reducing Use of E-Cigarettes Among Young People

Chair Greenlick, Chair Barnhart and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit a statement on taxation of inhalant delivery systems.

Both organizations, OMA and our partner on many things, OHSU, have 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, it is important to know that the Food and Drug Administration has not approved e-cigarettes as appropriate cessation devices. The FDA has approved many smoking cessation aids, including nicotine gum, patches, and lozenges that can be used to reduce a smokers' dependence on nicotine.

For Oregon's physicians, they are particularly concerned with the number of teens and young adults using these inhalant devices and the potential bridge they represent to traditional tobacco. In a recent JAMA Pediatrics 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

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

modeling their behavior based on their perception of what the marketing and media want them to believe. They are further enticed by the numerous flavors and devices that are targeted to appeal to their tastes.

We also know that teens and young adults are a very price sensitive group. An increase in the price of these devices and the liquid used for vaping will help to deter a teen from starting or continuing nicotine use.

The OMA and OHSU encourage the state to help protect young adults from products that can cause them harm and to tax e-cigarettes in order to reduce the appeal of this product and make it less attractive to young people with less disposable income.

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