



Legacy Health
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May 2, 2017

Representative Mitch Greenlick, Chair
Members of the House Committee on Health Care

Re: Legacy Health Supports SB 754

Legacy Health is Oregon's only locally owned nonprofit health care provider in the Portland-Vancouver area and mid-Willamette Valley with seven community-based and nationally recognized hospitals; more than 100 primary, specialty and urgent care clinics; nearly 3,000 providers; lab, research and hospice; and close to 13,000 employees.

Legacy Health supports SB 754 to raise the minimum age for the purchase and consumption of tobacco products in Oregon to age 21.

Tobacco use continues to be a significant public health concern and a leading cause of preventable death. Almost 25% of high school students still report using tobacco products, with nearly 90% of smokers beginning before age 18 and 95% before age 26.

Raising the minimum age to 21 is projected to result in a:

- 25% decrease in smoking initiation among 15 – 17 year olds
- 12% decrease in smoking prevalence
- 10% decrease in tobacco related deaths

Additionally, raising the age to 21 as the minimum legal age for purchasing and consuming alcohol has proven to successfully changed behavior. Studies show that binge drinking among high school seniors and fatal auto accidents caused by youth drunk driving have decreased.

Legacy Health urges you to support SB 754.

Sincerely,

George J. Brown, M.D., FACP
President and Chief Executive Officer