



## Testimony Regarding SB 235 B

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Co-Chairs Holvey and Girod, and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony in support regarding SB 235 B.

As direct care providers, nurses see firsthand the damages caused by smoking, and are faced with caring for many Oregonians who are suffering chronic illness as a result to tobacco and nicotine use. Recognizing that most tobacco and nicotine users become addicted at a young age, ONA supports a variety of tobacco and nicotine prevention policies specifically aimed at creating barriers to access, making tobacco and nicotine products less affordable, and eliminating marketing and flavors geared at youth.

ONA is neutral on the “smoking porch” exemption to the indoor clean air act contained in this bill, if it is coupled with a robust tobacco retail licensure system program, like the one currently in SB 235 B. A strong tobacco and nicotine licensure policy is foundational to ensuring compliance with state tobacco and nicotine restrictions and protections that ultimately curb youth access and addiction.

Like with Oregon’s alcohol and marijuana sales, a tobacco retail licensure program rests on the simple concept that retailers selling tobacco products, including inhalant-form nicotine, must comply with all relevant laws or risk losing the privilege of selling these products. The vast majority of states currently use some sort of tobacco retail licensure policy as an enforcement tool. Without this tool, Oregon consistently leads the nation with high illegal sales rates of tobacco to minors, actually topping the list in 2013 as the worst state.<sup>1</sup> Without a retail licensure structure in place, point of sale and tobacco tax policies are incredibly difficult to enforce and allow young Oregonians greater access to tobacco and nicotine products. Tobacco retail licensure is an important mechanism to ensure responsible retailing and compliance with public health laws.

**Without tobacco retail licensure, ONA is opposed the proposed “smoking porch” exemption to Oregon’s robust indoor clean air act.**

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<sup>1</sup> Oregon tops charts in illegal tobacco sales to minors; Multnomah County considers action, Multnomah County, November 2014.