

April 8, 2019

House Committee on Revenue re: HB 2270

Dear Chair, Nathanson, Vice-Chairs Marsh and Findley, Committee Members:

On behalf of myself our customers and employees of a small independent grocery store in Portland I'm asking you to reconsider raising the state tax on cigarettes by \$2.00 per pack.

The state just enacted moving the age to purchase cigarettes to 21 years old, but a person of age 18 is considered an adult. They can sign a legal contract, enlist in the armed services, be charged with a felony and most important they can VOTE. The segment of the population that are smokers is less than 20%.

By raising the cost of cigarettes to this small minority will force that segment of the population to purchase tobacco products elsewhere, either through the internet or to border state Indian casinos and/or reservations.

Not only will our retailers suffer but the state of Oregon will also suffer a reduction in the Tax Revenue that is generated through sales of cigarettes.

In the grocery industry we experience cost increases on products frequently, but not a 150% that you are proposing.

A large part of our sales are tobacco products and by raising the cost it effects our overall sales and profits. We will not only lose the sales of cigarettes but other products of higher margins.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Larry Stewart
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