



**MEDICAL SOCIETY**  
OF METROPOLITAN PORTLAND  
*Connecting Physicians in Community*

April 9, 2019

**Transmitted via eMail**

House Committee on Revenue  
[lro.exhibits@oregonlegislature.gov](mailto:lro.exhibits@oregonlegislature.gov)

Re: HB 2270  
Proposed tax increase on cigarettes and establish a tax on e-cigarettes and vaping products

Dear Members of the House Committee on Revenue:

On behalf of the Medical Society of Metropolitan Portland and the Board of Trustees, we support HB 2270 to increase the tax on cigarettes and establish a tax on e-cigarettes and vaping products.

We share the concerns of the Oregon Medical Association in this matter and believe this piece of legislation will reduce the use of nicotine products in adults and youth. Since 2017, the number of middle schoolers who say they have tried an e-cigarette has increased by 48%, effectively creating an entirely new generation of individuals addicted to smoking. According to the national economic studies from the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, a 10% increase in price will lead to a 4% decrease in adult consumption and a 7% decrease in youth consumption. With smoking being the number one cause of preventable death in Oregon, we believe it will take a strong action such as this legislation to help decrease the chance of smoking related illness and death.

Supporting this tax will also provide funds for medical coverage of low-income individuals and families on the Oregon Health Plan, help stabilize long-term health insurance costs and support tobacco cessation and prevention programs. Currently, 9% of all spending on the Oregon Health Plan is directly related to smoking related illness. This equates to roughly \$374 million per year. The revenue from this tax will provide \$346 million dollars per biennium for the Oregon Health Plan, which provides health care for nearly 1 million of the most vulnerable Oregonians, as well as meaningful investment in community and culturally specific program to address prevention and cessation of tobacco and nicotine.

We join the Oregon Medical Association in support of this tax and respectfully request that you take into consideration the critical role physicians play in the health of our community. Raising the state tobacco tax will support a higher quality of life in Oregon through a healthier population. We can no longer afford to pay the cost of lost lives.

Sincerely,



Amanda Borges, Executive Director  
on behalf of Medical Society of Metropolitan Portland  
and The Board of Trustees

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