



Marion-Polk County Medical Society

ADVOCATE. COLLABORATE. EDUCATE.

April 10, 2019
House Revenue Committee
Re: HB 2270

Dear Committee Members,

It's time for Oregon law makers to stand up to the tobacco industry and increase the tax to lower our state's health care costs and provide health care for over 400,000 children. Currently 9% of all spending on the OHP is directly related to smoking related illness. This equates to roughly \$374 million per year.

This legislation will provide \$346 million dollars per biennia for the Oregon Health Plan, which provides health care for nearly 1 million of the most vulnerable Oregonians, as well as meaningful investments in community and culturally specific programs to address prevention and cessation of tobacco and nicotine.

The tobacco tax will provide funds currently budgeted for the medical coverage of low-income individuals and families on Oregon Health Plan, help stabilize long-term health insurance costs, and support tobacco cessation and prevention programs through a \$2 per pack increase in the cost of cigarettes, and the first ever tax on e-cigarettes in the state.

Tobacco companies have targeted communities of color, tribes, low-income, and LGBTQ communities for decades in their advertising campaigns and now youth with e-cigarette campaigns. It's time to ensure that these communities are supported well enough so that when people are ready to quit, there are resources for them to do so.

E-cigarette companies are targeting kids with highly addictive, nicotine-filled products to get them hooked on a product filled with dangerous chemicals. Since 2017 the number of middle schoolers who say they have tried an e-cigarette has increased by 48%, effectively creating a whole new generation of addicted smokers.

Smoking is the number one cause of preventable death in Oregon. Studies show that this proposal will prevent over 19,000 kids from taking up smoking and help 31,000 Oregonians quit smoking.



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Raising the price of tobacco and nicotine products is the single most effective tool to reducing use. A 10% increase in price will lead to a 4% decrease in adult consumption and a 7% decrease in youth consumption.

For these reasons, we ask for your support of this tax increase.

On behalf of the Marion-Polk County Medical Society Board of Directors, I thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Krista S. Wood". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Krista S. Wood
Executive Director