



**COW CREEK BAND OF UMPQUA TRIBE OF INDIANS
GOVERNMENT OFFICES**

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To Oregon Senate President Peter Courtney, Oregon House Speaker Tina Kotek, and Members of the Oregon Legislative Assembly:

I am writing to express the support of Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians' for House Bill 2270, which would increase the price of commercial tobacco products including e-cigarettes.

It is no secret that American Indians and Alaska Natives have the highest rates of commercial tobacco use of any other racial or ethnic group. 40% of American Indian and Alaska Native adults in Oregon use commercial tobacco. Among youth, 28% of American Indian and Alaska Natives have reported the use of commercial tobacco products which is nearly double the rate of white youth in Oregon. Tobacco companies steal cultural imagery and promote tobacco use as if culturally appropriate. Tobacco use in ceremonial traditions is entirely different than lighting up a cigarette or using chewing tobacco.

The funds procured from the increase in tobacco tax will assist the development of cessation programs which we firmly believe to be a best practice for our cultural communities. Empowering our members from within these cessation programs, many will be able to find the support they need to quit smoking which has not been readily available prior.

Furthermore, Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians will not condone tax-free tobacco sales on any tribal lands. All tax laws set forth by House Bill 2270 will be procured and turned over in accordance to fund the Oregon Health Plan and cessation programs.

We as a tribe support House Bill 2270 and the increase of tax on tobacco products including e-cigarettes.

Thank you for your consideration,

Dan Courtney, Tribal Chairman

Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians