



Chair Nathanson, Vice-chairs Findley and Marsh and members of the Revenue Committee,

My name is Dan Torres and I am Political Coordinator with Oregon AFSCME which represents 27,000 workers across the state. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 2270, an important step in preventing adverse health effects from tobacco and e-cigarette products that also helps to pay for health prevention and cessation. Oregon AFSCME Council 75 represents county employees who work in public health around the state, including tobacco prevention and cessation programs. All counties have felt the growing strain of meeting the needs for health prevention work with ever diminishing funds. In some areas, we have had staffing cuts in many areas of public health including tobacco prevention & tobacco cessation programs.

We know that prevention works, when we fund our local public health authorities to do tobacco and e-cigarette education, cessation and prevention work, we see the results in reductions to adverse health outcomes and costs in our health care. We know both raising taxes and prevention work. Research shows that increasing costs 10% reduced adult consumption by 4% and youth consumption by 7%. Not only is a tax a disincentive, it helps fund the people in our communities who educate high schoolers and community organizations on the health impacts, importance of not starting, and how quitting is just as beneficial – countering the tobacco companies’ decades of advertising campaigns targeting teens, communities of color, tribes, low-income and LGBTQ. Our public health educators are able to work with the people in their communities to let them know about the dangerous chemicals in both tobacco and e-cigarette products and why consuming them harms people.

With smoking listed as Oregon’s number one cause of preventable death, we should be doing all we can to discourage usage, the dual approach of taxing and funding education is the right approach. Let’s ensure that every local public health authority has the adequate staffing to continue this important, life-saving work. Please pass HB 2270.

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