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June 17, 2019

Senator Hass, Co-chair  
Representative Nathanson, Co-chair  
Joint Committee on Tax Expenditures

Re: HB 2270A

Legacy Health supports HB 2270A. It is an important and timely tool for improving the public's health. Raising the price of tobacco by \$2 per pack and taxing gateway tobacco products like e-cigarettes will save lives, prevent youth from starting tobacco use, and will lower health care costs for all Oregonians.

Tobacco use is the number one preventable cause of death and disease in Oregon. More people die from tobacco than from obesity, alcohol, motor vehicle accidents, fire arms and illicit drug use combined. Tobacco use is a major risk factor for developing chronic diseases like cardiovascular disease, asthma and diabetes, which can make it harder for patients to manage these conditions.

Legacy Health is a locally owned nonprofit health care provider in the Portland-Vancouver area and mid-Willamette Valley. We are an integrated network of care providers in over 100 primary care, urgent care and specialty care clinics with seven community-based, nationally recognized hospitals.

Our hospitals and providers are on the front lines of acute patient care and see first-hand how these diseases limit patients' health, activity, and work. Every day we observe how their quality of life is affected, as well as the lives of their families. For many years, Legacy has been working to protect patients, families, visitors, and employees from the harms of tobacco. All Legacy facilities are tobacco free, we have a comprehensive tobacco cessation program for our patients, and we offer robust tobacco cessation services in our employee health plan.

To fundamentally reduce the burden of tobacco in communities, Oregon needs to raise the price of tobacco products, which is the most effective tobacco control intervention recommended by the Surgeon General. We urge you to support HB 2270A.

Sincerely,

Kathryn Correia  
President and Chief Executive Officer