



Oregon Pediatric Society

A Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics. Incorporated in Oregon

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TO: The Honorable Senator Laurie Monnes Anderson, Chair
Senate Committee on Health Care

FROM: Tamara M. Grigsby, MD
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Member of the Oregon Pediatric Society

SUBJECT: Senate Bill 1577 on banning vaping product flavors

The Oregon Pediatric Society (OPS) is the state chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics. Our members are committed to improving the health and well-being of all Oregon children. My name is Dr. Tamara Grigsby, and I am a pediatrician working at OHSU Doernbecher Children's Hospital. OPS supports the passage of SB1577, the Vaping Flavors Ban, in this short legislative session.

Public health professionals raised warning flags a decade ago when e-cigarettes first became available, marketed as a "safer alternative to smoking". This technology was untested and preyed on consumers addicted to nicotine, struggling to break the habit. Indeed, an unassuming public became subjects of an experiment, consuming nicotine in novel delivery systems, widely available to not only adults, but also younger generations. In Oregon and across the U.S., health care providers are now battling a crisis, manufactured by an industry that has never had the safety of U.S. citizens as part of their mission statement.

Though vaping has helped many adults to quit smoking, it has had far more widespread consequences of addicting children and youth to nicotine, and has proven to be a "gateway" drug. Furthermore, e-cigarette manufacturers have surreptitiously marketed their products to children, creating flavors like cotton candy, banana split, and fruit loops; and designing discrete vaping devices that make it easy for vaping children to escape detection by adults. Most notably, schools are witnessing youth vaping at alarming and increasing rates.

The electronic cigarette industry has now created a new deadly disease, known as EVALI (e-cigarette or vaping associated lung injury). This respiratory illness only affects e-cigarette users. Of the 2,711 cases of EVALI reported by the CDC as of 1/21/2020, over half have occurred in children and young adults under 25 years of age. Sixty individuals have died from EVALI; those deaths were preventable.

This legislation will not end the epidemic of child and adolescent nicotine addiction caused by e-cigarettes, but it will significantly reduce the number of children introduced to tobacco, lured by sexy advertising targeting their innocence. Children grow up believing state governments play an important regulatory role in the safety of their citizens and communities. Please prioritize the health and well-being of children and youth and support the Vaping Flavors Ban, SB1577.