

This is Spencer Knowles.

This is a copy of my testimony from the hearing today for Bill 1577

Please post on OLS.

Good afternoon madam chairwoman and members of the committee.

My name is Spencer Knowles, and I am the owner of High Mountain Mist in Bend. High Mountain Mist is an adult-only vape specialty shop that works with committed adult smokers to provide a viable alternative to smoking combustible cigarettes.

I come before you today to support the amendment numbered 1577-5, which would ban flavors from being sold in the state of Oregon unless sold within an establishment to which entry is prohibited to those under 21 years of age.

The state of Oregon has been a leader in preventing youth vaping, and as a vapor products business, I support the reduction of this youth trend. However, we must be cautious to not remove this reduced harm alternative from the adults that rely on it.

Facilities like mine and those of my colleagues here today already prohibit entry to minors, and are diligent to not sell our products to anyone under the age of 21.

The National Youth Tobacco Survey shows that the vast majority of youth use Juul or similar devices as they are cheap, easy to conceal, and incredibly high in nicotine content. Retail stores like mine focus on devices that adults prefer that are larger, with more functionality, cost more to set up initially, and use lower nicotine liquid. We prefer to leave the youth appealing products to the convenience stores.

This bill, as amended by 1577-5, would eliminate that product category being channeled to youth while maintaining the jobs and economic effect that stores like mine have created in Oregon. Without 1577-5, this bill would end hundreds of small businesses and the jobs they create across Oregon. I encourage you to either accept amendment 1577-5 with passage of this bill, or reject this bill outright.

Thank you for your time.

Spencer Knowles
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