

10 March 2021

To: Senate Committee on Rules

Re: Senate Bill 776

Dear Chair Senator Wagner, Vice-Chair Senator Girod, and members of the Committee:

I am opposed to SB 776 and urge the committee to promptly table it. No good can come of this.

I want to remind the Committee that in March 2017 the Senate vote to raise the age limit for possession of tobacco to 21 years ended up 19 aye to 8 no. Following that, in July 2017 the Senate vote was 19 aye, and 11 no. There was also the July 2017 House vote of 39 in favor to 20 opposed to raising the age for possession of tobacco to 21 years.

At the time, the majority of legislators firmly believed that teenagers needed to mature a bit more before they could be expected or, safely entrusted, to make rational, informed decisions about their lifestyles.

To reiterate, one of the major arguments in favor of the 2017 Senate Bill 754 to raise the age for possession of tobacco was that "teens" were not yet old enough to make sound judgments concerning themselves.

How, just three years later, that line of thought can be construed to implying teenagers can however make sound judgments regarding an elected official is quite a feat. Particularly keeping in mind that at that age they have barely begun to experience what life can throw at one. They perhaps can vote for class president. That this bill is even given serious consideration is an alarming commentary on current affairs in Oregon, and in particular, Oregon's legislators.

What mental gymnastics must one contort themselves into to arrive at such a diametrically opposed conclusion with this bill?

Where is the logic in this?

What sort of benefits to the state can anyone foresee coming from this legislation?

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Richard Wisner". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Richard Wisner