



Oregon Pediatric Society

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

DATE: March 19, 2021

TO: The Honorable Rachel Prusak, Chair
Representative Andreas Salinias and Cedric Hayden, Vice Chairs
And Members of the House Committee on Health Care

FROM: James A. Bishara, MD, FAAP
Oregon Pediatric Society Member

SUBJECT: Support for HB 2261, Prohibiting remote sales of inhalant delivery systems.

The Oregon Pediatric Society (OPS) is the state chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics. Our membership is committed to improving and protecting the health and well-being of all children in Oregon, as well as those who care for them. For the record, my name is Dr. James A. Bishara. I am a Pediatric Cardiologist at OHSU Doernbecher Children's Hospital, a member of the Oregon Pediatric Society, and the American Academy of Pediatrics E-Cigarette advisor for Oregon. OPS strongly endorses HB 2261, which would prohibit remote sales of inhalant delivery systems.

Tobacco addiction is a pediatric disease. 95% of users start using tobacco products before age 21 (SAMSA 2015). Adolescents are more likely to become addicted to nicotine due to the powerful effect of nicotine on their developing brain (Siqueira 2017). Earlier onset of use increases the risk and strength of tobacco addiction which makes it harder to quit (Ali 2020, Siqueira 2017). Because most users start as children and addiction is more likely in younger users, efforts must be focused in limiting youth access to e-Cigarettes and other nicotine containing products.

The use of nicotine and tobacco products has grown steadily over the past 15 years primarily due to e-cigarettes. This peaked in 2019 when almost 1 in 3 high school students and 1 in 10 middle school students admitted to using e-cigarettes in the past 30 days (Cullen 2019). For the first time, 2020 showed a decline in use due to concerns about weakening the lungs during the COVID-19 pandemic and decreased access (Wang 2020). Prohibiting online sales of e-cigarettes is an important measure to limit youth access, prevent lifelong addiction, and prevent lifespan problems of tobacco and nicotine related diseases.

Oregon has implemented several important measures related to tobacco and nicotine to improve the health of Oregonians. These include raising the minimum age to 21 and the recent ballot measure to increase tobacco taxes. Despite these efforts, there are still holes in the system. Online sales of tobacco and e-cigarette products are a source for minors to access e-cigarettes (Liu 2019, Nikitin 2016). Studies have found the youth can successfully purchase e-cigarettes over 90% of the time (Williams 2015). Oregon bans online sales of cigarettes and smokeless tobacco, but has no restrictions in place for e-cigarettes. Online sales represents a significant source for minors to obtain e-cigarettes with a clear solution to this problem.

Nicotine addiction is a disease that begins in youth. The most effective prevention is limiting



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youth access to nicotine-containing products. Prohibiting online sales of e-cigarettes will close the loophole of lax age regulation that allow youth the purchase these products.

Please vote to support HB 2261. This bill will improve public health efforts to prevent tobacco and nicotine related diseases.

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