



Oregon Pediatric Society

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

DATE: April 23, 2021

TO: Honorable Senator Deb Patterson, Chair
and Members of the Senate Committee on Health Care

FROM: William J. Byrne, M.D.
Retired Professor of Pediatrics
Member of the Oregon Pediatric Society

SUBJECT: Support for HB 2261 - Prohibiting Remote Sale 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 and adolescents in Oregon. On behalf of the OPS membership, I urge committee members to vote yes on HB 2261, which prohibits the remote sale of inhalant delivery systems to persons under 21 years of age.

Pediatricians in Oregon have become increasingly concerned about the sharp increase in the use of e-cigarettes (vaping) by teenagers. A recent study from the University of Michigan showed that e-cigarette use of more than 20 days per month increased nationally from 16.3% of high school students in 2015 to 34.2% in 2019. Among middle schoolers, e-cigarette use in 2019 was approximately 5%. Vaping devices and products are readily available and easily purchased.

If enacted, a companion bill in the 2021 legislative session—SB 587—will tie the sale of nicotine containing vaping products to tobacco licensure here in Oregon, but will not impact their purchase remotely either on line or by telephone.

Touted by some as a “safe” or even “harmless,” recent data and experience indicate that for vaping neither is true. Even as a smoking cessation strategy, efficacy has never been demonstrated. Vaping products contain variable quantities of nicotine, whose addictive properties, both physical and behavioral, are well-known. The mechanism is through the release of dopamine, a neurotransmitter associated with a brief feeling of contentment or pleasure. Each dose of nicotine reinforces the feeling and teaches the brain to repeat the same behavior. While most vaping devices deliver less nicotine per puff than a cigarette, one device—the Juul—delivers an amount which is equivalent. Along with the nicotine, each puff contains aerosolized volatile compounds, trace metals, and fine particulate matter, not just the advertised “harmless water vapor.” Long term effects of these substances on the upper and lower airways are unknown.



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Teenagers are especially susceptible to the addicting properties of nicotine, so it is not surprising that teens who vape are 3.6 times more likely to become users of tobacco products. It is no coincidence that four of the six largest manufacturers of vaping products are controlled by tobacco companies. Their marketing strategies target teenagers with vaping flavors such as Watermelon POP, Sunrise Pressed E-Juice, Space Jam and Carnival Juice all packaged in “cool” colorful containers. Available online, all that is required is a credit card.

HB 2261, which limits the remote sale of vaping delivery systems, and SB 587, which requires licensure for the sale of tobacco and nicotine containing vaping material in Oregon, will go a long way to limiting teenage access to these addicting and potentially dangerous vaping products. Please join me and the Oregon Pediatric Society in supporting HB 2261.

Thank you for your consideration.

William J. Byrne

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