



# Oregon Pediatric Society

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

DATE: February 12, 2021

TO: Senator Patterson, Chair; Vice-Chair Knopp;  
and Members of the Senate Committee on Health Care

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

SUBJECT: Support SB 587 – Tobacco Retail License

The Oregon Pediatric Society (OPS) is the state chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP). Our membership is committed to improving and protecting the health and well-being of all children in Oregon. For the record, my name is Dr. James Bishara. I am a pediatric cardiologist practicing in Salem, a member of the Oregon Pediatric Society, and the AAP E-Cigarette Policy Champion for the Oregon Chapter. I and the Oregon Pediatric Society support SB 587, which would require a license for retailers of tobacco products and inhalant delivery systems.

Pediatricians across the state and nation have been sounding the alarm about the growing epidemic of electronic-cigarette use among children and adolescents. The health hazards associated with nicotine products are well documented and completely preventable. E-cigarettes and tobacco products use targeted advertising towards children and flavors they know children enjoy (Walley 2019). Because of this, parents and pediatricians are finding more children dealing with nicotine addiction and withdrawal each year.

E-cigarette use or “vaping” in children and adolescents has risen every year since they were introduced to the marketplace, reaching a peak in 2019 where 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 e-cigarette use due to concerns about weakening the lungs and decreased access to products (Wang 2020). This improvement is a sign that we can make a difference in youth rates of use. Tobacco retail licenses can be a powerful public health tool to prevent addiction to nicotine containing products (Astor 2019).

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



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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 and 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.

Multiple studies have shown that well designed tobacco retail license laws can reduce youth use, access, and addiction to nicotine products (Astor 2019, Forster 1998, Hanusaik 2012). Some U.S. geographical areas have seen up to a 28% decline in adolescent use after implementing tobacco retail license laws like SB 587 outlines (CounterTobacco nd).

I believe SB 587 is a well-constructed tobacco retail license law that will make a significant impact on youth access to nicotine products and reduce the risk of a lifetime of addiction. This will be an excellent complement to 2020's Ballot Measure 108, the long overdue tobacco and e-cigarette tax increase, something that the voters of Oregon overwhelmingly supported.

Please, vote yes on SB 587. This bill will give Oregon needed public health tools to decrease nicotine addiction in our youth and future adults. I am happy to be a resource to this committee if you have any questions.

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## Citations

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