

February 15, 2021

The Honorable Deb Patterson, Senate Committee on Health Care
900 Court St. NE
Salem OR 97301

RE: Support for SB 587 Tobacco Retail Licensing

Dear Chair Patterson and members of the Senate Committee on Health Care,

Thank you for the opportunity to express Kaiser Permanente's support for SB 587. Kaiser Permanente is committed to helping shape the future of health care. Founded in 1945, Kaiser Permanente has a mission to provide high-quality, affordable health care services and to improve the health of our members and the communities we serve.

Tobacco use remain the leading cause of preventable disease, disability, and death in the United States. Oregon voters have repeatedly supported tobacco control efforts including limiting sales to those under 21 years of age and just last fall significantly increasing the statewide tobacco tax. In order to effectively enforce these important public health measures, the Oregon Health Authority needs to be able to license tobacco retailers. The Surgeon General has identified tobacco retail licensing as an effective way to reduce tobacco use.¹ With licensing in place, jurisdictions can identify those selling tobacco products in their community and enforce policies that stop youth from ever starting to use them. Oregon is one of only 12 remaining states that does not license the sale of tobacco.²

Kaiser Permanente is opposed to any preemptions limiting efforts to restrict the sale of tobacco at retail pharmacies. Local jurisdictions should have the ability to protect their communities from tobacco. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Amy Fauver
Director, Government and Community Relations

¹ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The Health Consequences of Smoking—50 Years of Progress. A Report of the Surgeon General. Atlanta, GA: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, 2014. Printed with corrections, January 2014.

² CDC State System Tobacco Retail Licensure Factsheet, accessed February 15th, 2021, online at <https://www.cdc.gov/statesystem/factsheets/licensure/Licensure.html>.