



VOICES UNITED.
OPPORTUNITY REIMAGINED.

March 1, 2021

Senate Committee on Health Care
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Support for SB 587

Chair Patterson, Vice-Chair Knopp and Members of the Committee,

Our Children Oregon's (OCO) mission is to be a voice and force for the common good for all Oregon children, ensuring all children have the resources and opportunities they need to reach their full potential. OCO is the result of the merger between two historic Oregon non-profits: The Children's Trust Fund of Oregon and Children First for Oregon. We elevate data and lived experience to prioritize children and center communities. We continue to connect a community of 115 advocates, coalitions, and organizations through The Children's Agenda, a legislative agenda championing equitable state legislative policies and shared investments to improve the lives of Oregon's children and their families.

SB 587: Requiring tobacco retailers to be licensed to see age-restricted products is part of the 2021 Children's Agenda.

Oregon punishes children from accessing tobacco products yet does not hold adults who sell tobacco to children accountable for their actions. Even though state licensing is proven to reduce youth tobacco use, Oregon is one of the last states without a Tobacco Retail License.

The state of Oregon and Oregon businesses have the responsibility to follow the law and keep tobacco products away from children, just as they do for alcohol, cannabis, and firearms. SB 587 will reduce youth from accessing tobacco products and hold adults accountable for selling tobacco to underaged youths in the following ways:

- Requiring compliance with the current law to lower underage tobacco sales
- Supporting local businesses by providing owners access to compliance resources through their local public health authorities
- Ensuring fairness by requiring a license just like all other age-restricted products

We must do all we can to protect Oregon youth and avoid their tobacco usage and its negative health impacts. Youth who use tobacco in early

**The
Children's
Agenda**

is a broad slate of equitable investments and policy solutions to meet the holistic needs of Oregon children, youth, and their families.



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stages of life are more at risk to continue usage throughout adulthood. SB 587 will provide another layer of protection and accountability to prevent children from accessing tobacco products.

Thank you for your consideration and your service. We urge you to support SB 587.

From the Our Children Oregon Team,

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Jenifer Wagley, Executive Director

View the 2021 Children's Agenda at www.ourchildrenoregon.org/2021-childrens-agenda