



## **Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 587**

March 1, 2021

Senate Committee on Health Care

Deborah Riddick JD, RN

Good afternoon Chair Patterson, Vice Chair Knopp, and members of the committee. My name is Deborah Riddick. I am the Director of Government Relations for the Oregon Nurses Association (ONA). We represent 15,000 registered nurses and professional members, and the Nurse Practitioners of Oregon. The ONA supports SB 587, requires Department of Revenue to issue license to qualified retailers of tobacco products and inhalant delivery systems.

The ONA supports SB 587 as reasonable measure to ensure that Oregon provides the oversight necessary to keep tobacco and vaping products out of the hands of our children. The recent success of Ballot 108 last year demonstrated that Oregon residents are committed to reducing early usage of nicotine products. Voters all across the state sent the message that it was time to act to prevent nicotine addiction and its related chronic conditions. SB 587 is an essential companion bill that institutes licensure of retailers so that state can adequately monitor and support lawful sales. It also provides a framework to address bad actors who currently go undetected in their sales to minors.

Our nursing members bear witness to the severe and lifelong complications attributed to smoking. Studies have revealed that vaping products attract younger targets with flavors and colorful packaging. Decades of research confirm that the earlier someone initiates smoking habits the more likely they will become a life-long user. Research shows that young people who vape are three times more likely to start smoking. The data are clear, and we have an obligation to protect our most vulnerable residents.

SB 587 is the product of collaboration of stakeholders, across various industries, that have come together in the interest of reasonable regulation that supports current law. It aligns with ONA's mission to support healthy communities. It supports the State's efforts to improve the health of children, who receive access to care regardless of residency status. Please vote yes to SB 587 to keep tobacco and vaping products away out of reach.