

March 21, 2023

The Honorable Rob Nosse, House Committee on Behavioral Health and Health Care
900 Court St. NE, H-472
Salem OR 97301

RE: Support for HB 3090

Dear Chair Nosse and members of the House Committee on Behavioral Health and Health Care,

Kaiser Permanente strongly supports HB 3090 and ending the sale of all flavored tobacco in Oregon. Prohibiting the sale of flavored tobacco products without exceptions or exemptions is a huge step forward to preventing another generation of young people from living with a lifetime of addiction.

Kaiser Permanente has served Oregon and Southwest Washington for over 70 years and we provide both coverage and medical care to more than 663,000 members in our service areas. Our mission is to provide high-quality, affordable health care services and to improve the health of our members and the communities we serve. As the nation's largest private integrated health care system, Kaiser Permanente is working to address upstream contributors to poor public health.

In Oregon, tobacco is still the leading cause of preventable death. Reducing tobacco use requires a multifaceted approach, starting with preventing youth and young adults from initiating tobacco use. The rapidly growing use of tobacco products among our nation's youth is one of the most critical public health issues currently facing our country. Flavored tobacco plays a key role in convincing young people to try tobacco products. Kid-friendly flavors like "cotton candy," "atomic fireball," and "sour mango" are marketed to appeal to underage users. Eight out of 10 youth who have tried tobacco started with a flavored product.

Kaiser Permanente physicians and other practitioners routinely caution patients, especially youth and their parents and guardians, about the harmful effects of nicotine products. Vaping specifically poses many health risks for teens and young adults: inhaling nicotine harms brain development and can lead to addiction and the use of more harmful tobacco products; vaping has known short-term negative health effects and unknown long-term effects; and flavoring and other ingredients may be toxic. To ensure the future health of our communities we must help young people avoid becoming hooked on these addictive products for life.

We urge you to help protect the health of current and future Oregonians by voting to support the HB 3090.

Sincerely,



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Medical Director, External Affairs, Government Relations and Community Health
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