

03/21/23

**Flavors Hook Oregon Kids
HB 3090 Testimony Letter**

Dear Chair Nosse, Vice-Chairs Nelson and Goodwein, and members of the House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care:

I am writing in support of HB 3090, the Preventing Nicotine Addiction bill, which will protect our kids and our communities by ending the sale of all flavored tobacco products in Oregon.

I am a parent of a young child but also a school psychologist in a middle school here in Oregon.

I support this bill because I see first-hand the impacts of flavored tobacco in our school community. Students are frequently trying to find these items, exchange them with one another, and are pressuring one another to use it via social media and in school buildings when in person or outside of school at parks and/or local establishments. This impacts a student's ability to sustain their attention, effort, and health while at school.

Our kids are being targeted by Big Tobacco. Our kids are using flavored tobacco. While product names like Cotton Candy and Tutti Fruitti sound harmless, they are very dangerous. Consider the facts:

- More than 3 million middle and high school students use tobacco and e-cigarettes.
- 85% of youth e-cigarette users use flavored products.
- Tobacco is the leading cause of preventable death and disease in Oregon, killing over 8,000 Oregonians a year.

Nicotine is highly addictive and can harm adolescent brain development. Taking action now will help protect our kids, prevent serious health impacts and avoid a lifetime of addiction.

Why is this bill necessary, when retailers are already prohibited from selling flavored tobacco to young people under age 21? Because it's not working.

- The Oregon Health Authority recently reported that 25% of Oregon businesses sold tobacco to underage buyers.

Passage of HB 3090, the Preventing Nicotine Addiction Act, will go a long way to protect youth across Oregon from falling into the trap of nicotine addiction and tobacco and e-cigarette use, as well as the host of serious health consequences associated with their use.

Sincerely,
Antonieta Servin Spath
School Psychologist, Ed.S. NCSP