

LISA REYNOLDS, MD
STATE REPRESENTATIVE
District 34



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

My name is Lisa Reynolds, and I'm the state representative for Oregon House District 34. It's an honor to bring forward this important bill, House Bill 3090.

I am, as you know, a pediatrician. And it is that work that informs all I do in this legislature. It is the very health and safety of our *youngest* Oregonians that is at the heart of this measure.

House Bill 3090 would end the sale of flavored tobacco products in Oregon therefore preventing the lifelong nicotine addiction, the long-term disease, and the short-term health impacts wrought by these products.

I am here today putting front and center the health and safety of Oregon children.

Tobacco is the leading cause of preventable death and disease, killing almost half a billion Americans and more than 8,000 Oregonians each year.¹ To be clear, most tobacco use takes root in adolescence, with 9 in 10 adults who smoke reporting that they started before they turned 18.² And, studies indicate that the younger someone is when they become addicted to nicotine, the harder it is to quit.³

And, there is a slew of long and short-term health effects of tobacco that one would do well to avoid. Let's take a trip back to medical school histology class, and talk a minute about the lung. I ask Rep. Dexter to correct me on any of this.

May I display a visual aid?

The lungs are incredibly fragile, with just a single layer of cells separating the tiniest air sacs, the alveoli, from our blood vessels. One *single* cell! This cell layer is designed to swiftly transport the oxygen we breathe in air from the air sac into our bloodstream in exchange for the Carbon dioxide from our blood to the airspace for exhalation.

That thinness, however, also means that the lungs *cannot* act as a protective barrier in the way, say, the skin might. This fragile lung tissue is not a filter, and it cannot discern oxygen from

¹Oregon Health Authority Public Health Division, Health Promotion and Chronic Disease Prevention Section. [Oregon tobacco facts](#).

²U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. [Preventing tobacco use among youth and young adults](#): A report of the Surgeon General, 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, 2012.; and Oregon Health Authority Public Health Division, Health Promotion and Chronic Disease Prevention Section. [Oregon tobacco facts](#).

³Oregon Health Authority Public Health Division, Health Promotion and Chronic Disease Prevention Section. [Oregon tobacco facts](#); and Health and Human Services (HHS). [Preventing tobacco use among youth and young adults: A report of the surgeon general](#), 2012. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, [Preventing tobacco use among young people](#): A report of the surgeon general, 1994.

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chemicals and poisons. Everything you breathe – everything that passes your lung tissue – enters the system.

And we know that all types of tobacco products contain chemicals that are harmful to health:⁴

- First, nicotine, which is one of the most addictive chemicals on the planet. And, in pediatrics, we are concerned about how this drug impacts our kids - and we see that it can increase symptoms of ADHD, anxiety, and depression (Flavors Hook Oregon Kids)
- Ultrafine particles that make their way to these alveoli, including
 - flavorings such as diacetyl, a chemical linked to serious lung disease
 - Volatile organic compounds
 - Heavy metals such as nickel, tin, and lead.
- Combustible cigarettes contain:
 - *Arsenic*
 - *Ammonia*
 - *Radioactive elements, such as polonium-210*
 - *Benzene, and more.*

Many of these chemicals are carcinogens, meaning they cause cancer. Of course, they affect the lung directly, but this rapid absorption in the single-celled lining of the alveoli, means these chemical make their way to many other target organs, causing cancer not just in the lung but in the bladder, and the stomach, colon, liver and cervix. And I'm sure we'll hear about the direct effect on the oral cavity. In far too many cases– whether by cancer or other long-term damage, such as heart and lung disease– long-term smoking leads to premature death.

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Flavored tobacco products encompass a broad range of forms, from menthol cigarettes to sweetly flavored aerosol vapes, as well as flavored chew and cigars. Flavors range from Cotton Candy to Mango to Strawberry Shortcake. These flavors mask the noxious, tarry taste and smell of tobacco which would otherwise deter a young person from smoking traditional cigarettes. Put simply, these palatable flavors are a gateway.

⁴[American Cancer Society.](#)

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In Oregon, 20% of middle and high school students use e-cigarettes.⁵ That's one in five! 81% of these kids start with flavored products, and 86% continue with flavored products for much of their youth.⁶⁷

And then: they become addicted for life, hooked by high levels of nicotine. I have certainly seen young patients in my own practice who are struggling to quit this addiction before they are even able to drive, get their first job, or graduate high school.

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The tobacco industry has purposefully targeted youth with their marketing of flavors. Where we see a child, the *tobacco industry* sees a new client, and one that will become a lifelong customer.

In Oregon alone, the tobacco industry spends \$115 million a year on advertising to market their products as *cool* and *trendy* and *safe*. Our kids are up against a massive— and deceptive— industry.

In fact, one vape company, JUUL Labs, has already agreed to pay nearly half a billion dollars to settle an investigation which found that they intentionally, wrongfully, and repeatedly targeted children in their marketing. Oregon will receive \$20.5 million from JUUL over this unlawful marketing.⁸

Ending the sale of flavored tobacco through HB 3090 is about *preventing* our kids from becoming addicted to nicotine, which sets them on a path for lifelong tobacco use, leading to lung damage, heart disease, and early death.

And, some good news: County commissioners in Multnomah county as well as commissioners AND voters in Washington county, have already chosen to protect their constituents with this public health measure. Shouldn't we extend such protections statewide?

Furthermore, Oregon is not the first state to take this on. Other states including California, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, and Rhode Island have already *successfully* ended the sale of flavored tobacco.

⁵CDC, [E-cigarette Use Among Middle and High School Students — United States](#), 2020

⁶Villanti, Andrea C et al. "[Flavored Tobacco Product Use in Youth and Adults: Findings From the First Wave of the PATH Study \(2013-2014\)](#)."

⁷CDC, Cooper M, Park-Lee E, Ren C, Cornelius M, Jamal A, Cullen KA. Notes from the Field: [E-cigarette Use Among Middle and High School Students](#)

⁸Oregon Department of Justice, [Oregon Leads \\$438 Million Agreement with JUUL Labs](#).

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I am here today putting front and center the health and safety of Oregon children. And, I urge you to do the same.

Thank you for your time. I yield to my colleagues, my partners, and the experts on this bill for further remarks.