

3/22/2023

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. This legislation will protect our kids and our communities by ending the sale of all flavored tobacco products in Oregon.

I support this bill because I've seen the impact of tobacco use on friends and members of my family. HB 3090 will save countless young people from a lifetime of nicotine addiction and its associated health risks.

The tobacco industry is successfully targeting kids and young people. While product names like Cotton Candy and Tutti Fruitti sound harmless, they are very dangerous. And it's these types of flavored products that are most popular with teenagers; among Oregon tobacco users in 2019, 75.1% of 11th graders used a flavored tobacco or vaping product compared to just 25.5% of adults age 25 and older. You've heard that this legislation limits adults' freedom to choose, but they've already chosen: the vast majority of them don't use these flavored products.

Consider the facts:

- More than 3 million middle and high school students use tobacco and e-cigarettes.
- Teen use of e-cigarettes has exploded from 1.5% in 2011 to 27.5% in 2019.
- Nicotine is highly addictive and can harm adolescent brain development.
- Tobacco is the leading cause of preventable death and disease in Oregon, killing over 8,000 Oregonians a year - more than all other preventable causes of death *combined*.

Oregon's Tobacco Retail License program and Tobacco 21, which raised the minimum sales age of tobacco products from 18 to 21, are crucial tools in protecting our communities from the harms of tobacco use. They are, however, not enough to keep tobacco products out of the hands of young people; the Oregon Health Authority recently reported that 25% of Oregon businesses sold tobacco to underage buyers.

Passage of HB 3090 is necessary 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,

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