

Flavors Hook Oregon Kids
HB 3090 Testimony Letter
3/22/23

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 and inhalant products in Oregon.

I am the School Social Worker at Tigard High School in the Tigard-Tualatin School District.

I support this bill because I am witnessing firsthand the outcome of nicotine addiction among our teenage population. Our students are being hooked by the marketing techniques of these big tobacco companies.

Students 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.

Many students have trouble making it through the day without vaping or smoking. Nicotine is highly addictive and can harm adolescent brain development. Taking action now will help protect our kids, prevent serious health impacts, and potentially avoid a lifetime of addiction.

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

- The Oregon Health Authority recently reported that 25% of Oregon businesses sold tobacco to underage buyers.
- Young people experiencing nicotine addiction will go to lengths to get their hands on flavored nicotine products.

If we want a successful and thriving society then we need for our youth to be healthy and not impacted by the harmful effects of nicotine addiction.

Banning flavored tobacco products would be just one step in helping our impacted students regain their health and their education which translates in big ways to their futures. It starts with decision makers now deciding that our youth matter much more than the revenue stream of big tobacco companies.

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 and in turn life consequences associated with their use.

We have to act now.

Sincerely,
Naila Lundstrom
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