



Legacy Health
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March 3, 2025

Senate Committee on Early Childhood and Behavioral Health

Re: Senate Bill 702

Chair Reynolds and Members of the Committee:

Legacy Health supports Senate Bill 702, which will protect our kids and our communities by ending the sale of all flavored tobacco products in Oregon.

Legacy Health is a nonprofit health care provider in the Portland-Vancouver area and mid-Willamette Valley with an integrated network of care providers in over one hundred primary care, urgent care, and specialty care clinics and six community-based and nationally recognized hospitals.

Legacy Health supports Senate Bill 702 because we witness every day one of Oregon's most persistent public health challenges – tobacco and nicotine addiction.

Tobacco use continues to be a significant public health concern. It is the leading cause of preventable death and disease in Oregon, with 5,500 Oregonians dying as a result of smoking each year, and nearly all tobacco use begins during youth and young adulthood.

For decades, the tobacco industry has targeted Black Americans and our youth with menthol and now, with fruity and candy flavors. Flavored tobacco products like Cool Mint, Watermelon Ice, and Cotton Candy hook new generations of young users and disproportionately impact communities of color.

Our hospitals and providers are on the front lines of acute patient care and see firsthand how highly addictive and harmful nicotine is to adolescent brain development. E-cigarettes are the most popular tobacco product among Oregon teens, with over 10% of 11th graders using them in the past month¹ and nearly 90% of youth e-cigarette users use flavored products.²

Ending the sale of flavored tobacco now will help protect our kids, prevent serious health impacts, and avoid a lifetime of nicotine addiction.

We urge you to support SB 702.

Sincerely,


Melinda Muller (Feb 27, 2025 09:10 PST)

Melinda Muller, MD, FACP
Senior Vice President and Chief Medical Officer

¹ Oregon Health Authority, Oregon Student Health Survey

² Results from the 2024 Annual National Youth Tobacco Survey