

Submitter: Shaayan Sinha  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: Senate Committee On Education  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB544

Chairman Frederick and members of the Senate Committee of Education,

I am Shaayan Sinha, a sophomore at Glencoe High School, and I'm here to express my strong support for Senate Bill 544. The primary purpose of this bill is to implement vape detectors in high schools to curb youth vaping in schools. Vaping has been linked to brain damage, respiratory damage, and cardiovascular disease. This behavior not only jeopardizes the health and well-being of students, but it also undermines our collective efforts to create safe, supportive, and conducive learning environment for all. This bill will implement a pilot program at Glencoe High School to install vape detectors in school bathrooms for 50,000 dollars.

During my freshman year, I quickly found that using the bathroom had become a nerve-wracking experience. Why? Because every time I entered the restroom, I was greeted by a thick cloud of vapor. It gave me anxiety and fear to even go to the bathroom. And it wasn't just me—my peers, teachers, and administrators all recognized that vaping had become a significant problem in our school bathrooms.

Determined to understand the extent of the issue, I decided to gather data about teen vaping at Glencoe High School. What I discovered was alarming: between the 2022 and 2023 school years, reported cases of vaping in our school increased by 225%. And in the unfinished 2024-2025 school year, the number of reported vape cases is already equal to the previous year, illustrating the rapid rise of vaping at my school.

Statewide data from the Oregon Department of Education on the five largest counties in Oregon makes this problem even clearer. In those counties alone, over 6,600 11th graders and nearly 3,000 8th graders self-reported using e-cigarettes. These numbers are just from 8th and 11th graders in five counties—imagine how much higher the numbers would be if we included all high school students across all Oregon counties, and included unreported cases as well. This paints a sobering picture of how widespread the problem has become.

A national survey on teen vaping further highlights the issue. When students were asked where vaping is most likely to occur, the bathroom was the most common response. This is because bathrooms are difficult to monitor, making them an ideal location for vaping. In my own experience, going into the bathroom at school felt like a test of courage—there was always a chance I'd walk in and find someone vaping, without any consequences.

This bill proposes a pilot program to install vape detectors in high school bathrooms at Glencoe High School, which will be funded by a \$50,000 grant from the state of Oregon. While this is a considerable investment, many schools that have implemented vape detectors have experienced positive outcomes. For example, after the Pendleton School District installed vape detectors, there was an initial surge in vaping violations which has decreased dramatically with only 2 reported cases since October. This pilot program at Glencoe High School will not only help reduce vaping on campus but also provide valuable insights and data that can guide other schools across Oregon in implementing similar measures to protect student health.

Importantly, the goal of these detectors is not to punish students who are caught vaping, but to identify those who may need help and connect them to programs focused on prevention and education about the dangers of vaping and substance abuse. As a motivated high schooler, I strongly urge the committee to support this bill. By implementing vape detectors, we can help students who are struggling with vaping, while fostering a safer and healthier school environment for everyone.

Thank you for your time and consideration.