

Submitter: Holly Fowler

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Rules

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1571

February 25, 2026

House Committee on Rules, Oregon State House

900 Court St. NE

Salem, Oregon 97301

RE: Pass SB 1571A and Protect Oregon's Kids

Dear Chair Bowman, Vice-Chairs Elmer and Pham, and members of the Committee:

My name is Holly Fowler, and I'm a student in Lake Oswego.

Right now, Oregon has no state regulations to protect your kids from the danger of nicotine pouches. This means that nicotine pouches can be sold anywhere without a state license. Oregon has no state law to restrict their sale, even to kids. I have seen firsthand how that has impacted my peers and other children as young as eleven.

Over the past few years, the use of nicotine pouches at my school has become normalized in ways I've never seen before. Students who have never vaped or shown an interest in nicotine products have begun using nicotine pouches because they think they are harmless, often compared to a piece of flavored gum. They are shared casually between friends and discussed openly, talking about "popping a zyn." They are marketed as "smoke-free" and "clean," leading to an understanding that they are a "safer alternative" despite the continued harm of nicotine to the developing brain.

This is causing younger students to begin experimenting with nicotine at a much younger age. I know eleven-year-old middle schoolers who have tried nicotine pouches. These kids rapidly become dependent at a much earlier age than past generations, without even realizing it. Unlike vaping, nicotine pouches are easy to hide, odorless, and can be so discreet that many of my peers could have one in at home without a parent ever noticing. Regular use of these pouches can also lead to sores in people's mouths. I've seen these in the mouths of people at my school, and they look extremely painful.

I've seen peers go from completely functional in day to day life to needing to vape the second they get to school (before class starts), putting a zyn in for class, and taking bathroom vape breaks just so they feel calm enough to focus in class and get through the day functioning normally, even though they aren't functioning that normal

- I know a girl who has been significantly impacted by zyns, she started with them in 5th grade and they rapidly led her to a path of further addiction. Today, she can barely string a sentence together and goes through her day-to-day life high or drunk at pretty much all times because she has become dependent on these products.

The use of nicotine pouches is likely much more pervasive than teachers or adults realize, as students can so casually have one in their mouth without you noticing.

With such limited regulation, kids are able to access these easily, and financially,

zyns add up quickly. What starts with one pack (like a pack of gum but more expensive) every once in a while can quickly turn into running through more than one pack a week! (One pack has 15-20 pouches, usually) which gets really expensive really fast.

Socially, nicotine pouches have created a lot of pressure to use them in order to fit in with peers as well. Regulating nicotine pouches in Oregon is really important because they are clearly marketed to youth, even if they were technically invented for adults. Nicotine is harmful to the developing brain and creates a bigger risk for addiction, anxiety, attention problems, and long-term dependence. Proper regulation would help reduce youth access and exposure, prevent misleading marketing claims, protect students from addiction before it starts, and help create consistency between all products. Please pass Senate Bill 1571.

Thank you,
Holly Fowler