

TO: Co-Chairs Nathanson & Bates  
Joint Ways & Means Subcommittee on Human Services

DATE: April 2, 2015

RE: HB 5526

Co-Chairs Nathanson & Bates, and committee members:

On behalf of the American Heart Association and the American Stroke Association, thank you for the opportunity to support investment in public health.

The two leading causes of preventable death in Oregon are tobacco-use and obesity. I'd like to highlight two important programs that the Public Health Division is using to address these, and highlight one critically important funding stream for both.

### **Tobacco Prevention & Education Program (TPEP)**

Despite declines in tobacco use, it remains Oregon's leading cause of preventable death, killing 7,000 Oregonians each year, while draining our pocketbooks and state budget.

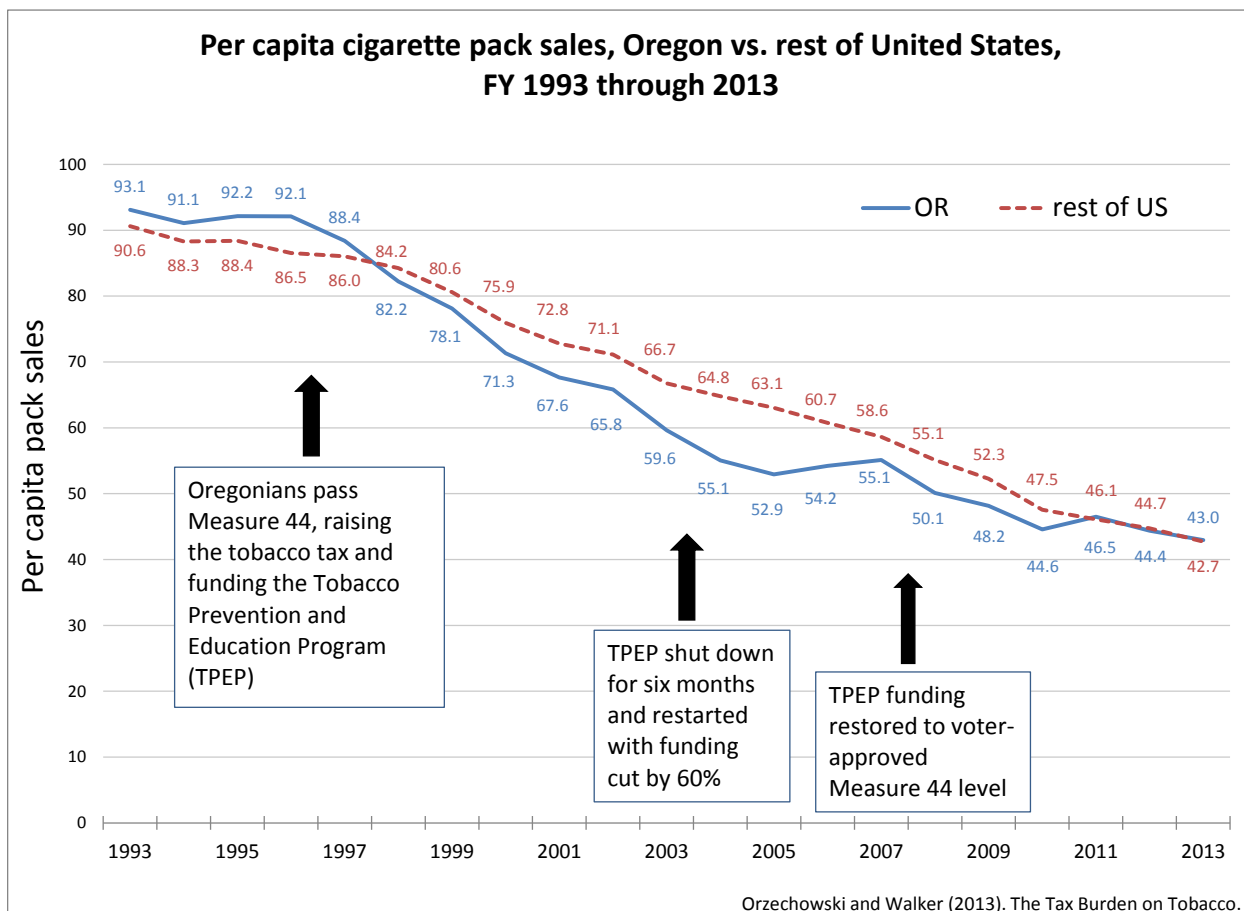
- Tobacco is a major risk factor for developing cardiovascular disease (Oregon's number one killer) and stroke (Oregon's fourth leading cause of death).
- Whether or not we use tobacco, all Oregonians pay its price. Medical expenses and lost wages that result from tobacco-related disease and premature death cost Oregon \$2.5 billion each year.
- Additionally, glaring health disparities persist: lower-income Oregonians and certain racial and ethnic communities use tobacco at higher rates and suffer the harshest consequences.

It's been 50 years since the US Surgeon General issued its first report warning of the dangers of tobacco. Today, we know what policies work to save lives. We know that a cornerstone of effective tobacco control is a strongly supported evidence-based prevention program.

Oregon's Tobacco Prevention and Education Program (TPEP) works in partnership with local health authorities, tribes and community-based organizations to engage communities promoting smoke-free environments and reducing the influence of tobacco marketing on the most vulnerable among us, particularly kids.

Since TPEP launched in 1997, these locally-driven efforts have helped reduce tobacco consumption and youth smoking in Oregon by more than 50 percent—saving lives and money. **For every \$1 invested in TPEP, \$5 is saved.**

Currently, Oregon only funds its tobacco prevention program at 28% of the recommended CDC level. The American Lung Association gave Oregon an "F" in its *State of Tobacco Control 2015* report.



**With TPEP’s success at reducing tobacco-use, we support maintaining the investment of \$4 million in Tobacco Master Settlement Agreement dollars made in 2013-15 biennium, and increasing that by \$1 million in additional funding to continue making progress.**

### **Obesity Prevention: Healthy Communities Programs**

Today, about 60 percent of Oregon adults are overweight or obese, as well as 1 in 4 Oregon kids. Our social and physical environments are powerful influencers affecting what we eat, how we live, and how healthy we are.

Unfortunately, nutritious food and places to play and exercise are out of reach for too many people. That’s why Oregonians are re-shaping the places they live, learn, work, and play to put healthy options within reach for everyone.

The Healthy Communities Programs at the Oregon Health Authority should play a critical role in that effort. These programs mobilize communities to establish good policy to help people take charge of their health outside of the doctor’s office. Healthy Community Programs use community-wide mobilization to make tobacco-free living, eating better and moving more, easier for all Oregonians. State and local partners work together to:

- **Increase availability of healthy foods and beverages in child care, schools, worksites, and in neighborhoods;**
- **Increase places where people can be physically active safely;**
- **Increase a woman’s ability to start breastfeeding and keep at it;**

- Increase access to programs, such as the National Diabetes Prevention Program or Living Well with Chronic Conditions/Tomando Control that help them take better care of themselves; and
- Talk with the public about the benefits of screening for common chronic diseases like colorectal cancer, hypertension, and prediabetes.

**With Healthy Communities emphasis on reducing the obesity epidemic at the local level, we support a new investment of \$3 million with Tobacco Master Settlement Agreement dollars.**

### **Tobacco Master Settlement Agreement (TMSA) Investment**

When states signed the Tobacco Master Settlement Agreement (TMSA) with the “Big 4” tobacco companies in 1998, tobacco companies agreed to pay states in yearly installments as compensation for costs associated with tobacco-related disease. Oregon promised to use its settlement funds to improve public health and protect Oregonians from the dangers of smoking.

In 2013, the Legislature honored that promise by dedicated a small portion of Oregon’s Tobacco Master Settlement funds to tobacco prevention efforts for the first time in state history.

In 2013, with \$124 million in TMSA available to allocate, the Legislature dedicated \$4 million to tobacco prevention and \$4 million to children’s health (PE Grants) and \$116 million to the Medicaid program.

The legislature has an opportunity to maintain this promise and continue investing in tobacco prevention, building upon the success of Oregon’s efforts.

We support the following TMSA investments for 2015-17:

- **\$124 million** – Investment in Oregon’s Medicaid programs
- **\$5 million** – Investment in tobacco prevention programs
- **\$5 million** – Investment in physical education programs
- **\$3 million** – New investment in obesity prevention via “Healthy Communities” program

### **Prevention Programs Yield State Savings**

Every year 4,200 Oregon children start smoking. Research shows that ninety percent of today’s smokers started smoking before they turned 18. Prevention efforts are the most effective and most cost-effective way to reduce tobacco use and improve long-term health outcomes.

Investing in the proposed prevention initiatives will honor the intent of the settlement agreement and result in significant health benefits to Oregonians and long-term state savings by reducing Oregon’s direct health care costs and increasing workplace productivity.

Thank you for your time and service.

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# TOBACCO MASTER SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT (TMSA)



**BACKGROUND:** When states signed the Tobacco Master Settlement Agreement (TMSA) with the “Big 4” tobacco companies in 1998, tobacco companies agreed to pay states in yearly installments as compensation for costs associated with tobacco-related disease. Oregon promised to use its settlement funds to improve public health and protect Oregonians from the dangers of smoking.

In 2013, the Legislature honored that promise by dedicated a small portion of Oregon’s Tobacco Master Settlement funds to tobacco prevention efforts for the first time in state history. In 2013, with \$124 million in TMSA available to allocate, the Legislature dedicated \$4 million to tobacco prevention and \$4 million to children’s health (PE Grants) and \$116 million to the Medicaid program.

**INVESTMENT:** The legislature has an opportunity to maintain this promise and continue investing in tobacco prevention, building upon the success of Oregon’s efforts. The TMSA Campaign is supported by the *American Heart Association, American Cancer Society - Cancer Action Network, American Lung Association in Oregon, the Oregon Nurses Association, the Association of Oregon Counties, the Coalition of Local Health Officials, and Upstream Public Health*. These organizations support the following TMSA investments for 2015-17:

- **\$124 million** – Investment in Oregon’s Medicaid programs
- **\$5 million** – Investment in tobacco prevention programs
- **\$5 million** – Investment in physical education programs
- **\$3 million** – New investment in obesity prevention via “Healthy Communities” program

**State Savings:** Every year 4,200 Oregon children start smoking. Research shows that ninety percent of today’s smokers started smoking before they turned 18. Prevention efforts are the most effective and most cost-effective way to reduce tobacco use and improve long-term health outcomes. Investing in the proposed prevention initiatives will honor the intent of the settlement agreement and result in significant health benefits to Oregonians and long-term state savings by reducing Oregon’s direct health care costs and increasing workplace productivity.

**Prevention Programs:** Tobacco prevention, physical education and obesity prevention programs are important to promote healthy behavior and reduce the incidence of chronic illnesses among youth. Research has shown that teens with low physical activity tend to have lower academic standards and are more likely to smoke or use other drugs. Together, these prevention programs can reduce the use of tobacco and other drugs and increase students’ overall health and sense of well-being.

The AHA’s is committed to reducing death from heart disease and stroke. With this investment in cost-effective prevention programs we can help prevent the leading causes of preventable deaths in the United States — tobacco use, poor nutrition, and physical inactivity.