



Sheri Malstrom, RN  
Oregon Nurses Association  
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Support HB 2546A and SB 415

Chair Monnes Anderson and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of the Oregon Nurses Association in support of HB 2546A and SB 415. My name is Sheri Malstrom. I have been a public health nurse specializing in child and maternal health for the past thirty years.

The Oregon Nurses Association is Oregon's oldest and largest nursing union and professional association, and is proud to represent over 13,000 registered nurses, advanced practice nurses and nursing students in Oregon. ONA supports policies that focus on prevention of chronic disease and promotion of wellness.

Oregon is one of only nine states that do not regulate e-cigarettes. The World Health Organizations recommends regulating e-cigarettes the same way traditional cigarettes are regulated, which means including e-cigarettes and vaping in Oregon's Indoor Clean Air Act to protect public spaces and place of employment. These products are not emission free. Second hand aerosol emitted from them is not merely water vapor. The California Department of Public Health determined e-cigarettes emit a "concoction of chemicals toxic to human cells in the form of an aerosol" and they contain at least ten chemicals known to cause cancer, birth defects, and other reproductive harm. New research continues to emerge constantly, with little information about safe usage.

The nurses I work with provide care to some of our most vulnerable residents. We help care for pregnant women, new mothers and their infants and children. We counsel women and teenagers about the known dangers of tobacco use and the addictive nature of nicotine. We also know that the earlier a child is exposed to nicotine, the more likely they will become addicted. A key component of electronic cigarettes, vape pens and other inhalant delivery systems is nicotine, which is especially harmful to developing brains in children and teenagers.

Limiting the appeal of these products is equally as important to preventing children and youth from becoming addicted to nicotine. SB 415 helps do so. We've seen a clear connection between kids starting with e-cigarettes and moving to more traditional tobacco. E-cigarettes are marketed as an alternative to traditional cigarettes, complete with colorful and tasty sounding flavors that are especially enticing to children and teenagers. Limiting the e-cigarette industry's ability appeal to youth by limiting the flavors available will help make vaping less appealing and help prevent Oregon's youth from getting addicted.

As a public health nurse, I urge you to support of HB 2541A and SB 415 to prohibit minors from buying or possessing e-cigarettes and include e-cigarettes in Oregon's Clean Indoor Air Act to protect public health and to stop the gateway to a new generation of nicotine addicts.