Testimony in Opposition to SB 639
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Senator Riley and members of the committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of promoting public health by ensuring that public spaces are free from smoke and vapor pollution. The Oregon Nurses Association is proud to represent over 15,000 Oregon nurses who are acutely aware of the detrimental effects of smoking and second-hand smoke and vapor, which is why ONA supports protecting and expanding the Indoor Clean Air Act (ICAA) and prohibiting smoking in all public spaces.

Ultimately, inhaling smoke of any kind is harmful. Marijuana smoke is still a combustible substance that contains many of the same toxins, irritants and carcinogens as tobacco smoke.[1][2] That is why the Journal of the American Heart Association encourages secondhand smoke laws extend to marijuana use because both tobacco and marijuana smoke impair blood vessel function similarly.[3] A John Hopkins study shows that after an hour exposed to second hand marijuana smoke, nonsmokers' blood and urine tests showed detectable amounts of THC, in some cases enough to test positive for workplace or commercial drug testing programs.[4] Allowing smoking in public spaces puts an undue burden and risk on the general public and event staff.

In the same vein, allowing smoking and vaping at cannabis lounges puts an undue burden on the employees who work there. Under the Indoor Clean Air Act, employees are guaranteed workplaces free from second-hand pollutants. Separating smokers from nonsmokers, opening windows, or relying on ventilation systems does not prevent people from breathing secondhand smoke. This is why the American Society for Heating, Refrigeration, and Air Conditioning Engineering (ASHRAE) added marijuana smoke to their definition of environmental tobacco smoke (ETS) and state that there is no ventilation system that can eliminate it.[5]

SB 639 would also create inequities across the state by allowing some localities to participate in temporary events. Communities that are already disproportionately targeted by tobacco advertising, including low-income areas and communities of color, would now be subject to additional exposure to second-hand smoke at the discretion of their local government.

We have learned a tremendous amount about the negative health impacts of the tobacco, nicotine and second-hand smoke over the decades and worked hard to put in place regulations that minimize exposure for future generations. The state should use that knowledge by ensuring that the starting point for marijuana regulations aligns with current tobacco regulations – namely through limiting use in public spaces.

As direct care providers for many Oregonians who suffer from chronic illness as a result of smoking and second-hand smoke, ONA urges you to oppose SB 639. We ask that you put the rights of employees and members of the public to be *free* from second-hand smoke and vapor over the privilege of marijuana users to smoke and vape in businesses and public spaces.

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[1] One Minute of Marijuana Secondhand Smoke Exposure Substantially Impairs Vascular Endothelial Function, Journal of the American Heart Association, July 2016. http://jaha.ahajournals.org/content/5/8/e003858.full#ref-38
[2] Marijuana and Public Health, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, January 2017. https://www.cdc.gov/marijuana/health-effects.htm
[3] One Minute of Marijuana Secondhand Smoke Exposure Substantially Impairs Vascular Endothelial Function.
[4] Secondhand marijuana smoke can cause range of detectable effects, study finds, John Hopkins May 2015 https://hub.jhu.edu/2015/05/15/secondhand-marijuana-smoke-study/
[5] American Society of Heating Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers, Addenda 2015 Supplement: Ventilation for Acceptable Indoor Air Quality. 2015.

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