



State Rep. Nancy Nathanson, Chair  
House Committee on Revenue  
Oregon State Legislature  
900 Court Street NE  
Salem, OR 97301

5 April, 2019

Chair Nathanson,

Tobacco is the number one cause of cancer and preventable death in Oregon and across the country. In fact, tobacco is the cause of nearly 30% of all cancer diagnosis. Every year, 8,000 families in Oregon lose a family member due to tobacco-related death and many more hardworking families are burdened by the \$1.5 billion in healthcare costs associated with tobacco addiction.

More than half of current smokers in Oregon want to quit smoking, and evidence proves an increase to tobacco taxes is the best way to encourage current smokers to quit which is why ACS CAN supports HB 2270. Oregon's current tobacco tax of \$1.33 per pack of cigarettes is well below the national average \$1.79 per pack. ACS CAN projects HB 2270 will help 31,300 current Oregon smokers to quit.

But the positive health effects of a tobacco tax increase aren't limited to adult smokers. Indeed, a tobacco tax increase is the best strategy to price youth out of purchasing their first addictive and deadly tobacco product. HB 2270 is projected to prevent 19,200 youth from being life-long adult smokers. Furthermore, due to a significant increase in youth addiction to e-cigarettes, establishing the state's first-ever e-cigarette tax has never been more warranted.

The cost of tobacco addiction in Oregon's healthcare system is significant, every taxpaying household in Oregon pays \$1,700 annually to cover the cost of tobacco-related illnesses. ACS CAN projects HB 2270 will save \$14.86 million over 5-years in Medicaid program savings.

Tobacco and e-cigarette addiction impose a significant fiscal and health burden on Oregonians. HB 2270 is an evidence-based solution to save lives and reduce healthcare costs.

Sincerely,

Christopher Friend

Oregon Government Relations Director

American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network

**Christopher Friend**

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