



To: Oregon House Revenue Committee
From: Cyreena Boston Ashby, CEO Oregon Public Health Institute
Re: HB 2270
Date: April 9, 2019

Dear Chair Nathanson and Members of the Oregon House Revenue Committee:

My name is Cyreena Boston-Ashby and I am the CEO of the Oregon Public Health Institute writing to share my organization's support of HB 2270. I submit this written testimony for the record.

OPHI's mission is to improve the health of Oregonians. We are committed to improving equity, honoring diversity and reducing disparities in order to build vibrant and healthy communities.

Since 1999 OPHI has analyzed the various origins of chronic disease in Oregon. Today, tobacco is the leading cause of preventable death in Oregon and tobacco companies have targeted communities of color, tribes, low-income consumers, and LGBTQ communities for decades in their advertising campaigns, leading to inequitable health outcomes for those same populations. And now, big tobacco is targeting youth with e-cigarette campaigns, reversing the decades-long progress that has been made in reducing youth tobacco use.

According to the Surgeon General, raising the price of tobacco and nicotine products is the single most effective tool to reducing usage. As a public health industry standard, OPHI has long supported tobacco pricing strategies to decrease tobacco consumption in Oregon and nationally. Industry reports show that tobacco companies understand the impact of tax increases on consumption. In response, they mount aggressive opposition campaigns when anyone proposes an increase to the tax on their products.

We support the work being done to amend HB 2270 to ensure that not only targeted communities are supported with resources for people when they are ready to quit, but significant investments are being made to prevent people from ever starting this deadly habit in the first place. I urge your support for this important public health policy, and I thank you for your consideration and leadership.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'CA', written over a light blue horizontal line.

Cyreena Boston Ashby, CEO
Oregon Public Health Institute
411 NE 19th Avenue,
Building #1 First Floor,
Portland, OR 97232
Phone: (844) 494-OPHI (6744)
cyreena@ophi.org