

**From:** [Jeff Lang](#)  
**To:** [LRO](#)  
**Cc:** [Rep Smith D](#); [aeaston@oahhs.org](mailto:aeaston@oahhs.org)  
**Subject:** Support HB 2270A  
**Date:** Monday, June 17, 2019 9:16:17 AM

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Co-Chairs Hass, Nathanson and members of the Joint Committee on Tax Expenditures:

Coquille Valley Hospital District supports HB 2270A as an important and timely policy tool for improving the public's health. Raising the price of tobacco by \$2.00 per pack and taxing gateway tobacco products like e-cigarettes will save lives, prevent youth from starting tobacco and will lower health care costs for all Oregonians. Tobacco use is the number one preventable cause of death and disease in Oregon. More people die from tobacco than from obesity, alcohol, motor vehicle accidents, fire arms and illicit drug use combined. Tobacco use is also a major risk factor for developing chronic diseases like cardiovascular disease, asthma and diabetes and can make it harder for patients to manage these conditions.

Coquille Valley Hospital and our physicians are on the front lines of acute patient care and consequently witness people with chronic diseases experiencing limitations in function, health, activity, and work, affecting the quality of their lives as well as the lives of their families. Through our Community Health Needs Assessment and associated Improvement Plan, we have been taking steps to protect patients, families, visitors, and employees from the harms of tobacco. To fundamentally reduce the burden of tobacco in communities, Oregon needs to raise the price of tobacco products– the most effective tobacco control intervention recommended by the Surgeon General. We urge you to support HB 2270A.

The effects of tobacco, specifically smoking, in our area is quite extreme. As a rural, less affluent community, we have a high incidence of smoking. I can tell you from personal experience that cigarettes are greatly reducing the quality of life for many Oregonians on the South Coast. In our hospital, we are continually caring for *young* seniors who, due to chronic health conditions, are not able to enjoy their golden years to their full extent due to having to fight for every breath. Our staff are there with them as they mount their battle for every breath, and unfortunately, we have too many experiences of being with these patients as they lose the battle. The effects of smoking are truly devastating for not only the smoker but the families, care givers, and community at large.

Please feel free to contact me should you have any questions whatsoever on the effects of tobacco products on the health of our patients and community.

Sincerely,

***Coquille Valley Hospital District***

Jeffrey M. Lang,

Chief Executive Officer



COQUILLE VALLEY HOSPITAL

940 East 5<sup>th</sup> Street  
Coquille, OR 97423  
[jeffl@cvhospital.org](mailto:jeffl@cvhospital.org)  
541-396-1050

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