



Monday, June 17, 2019

Re: Please Support HB 2270

Dear Representative Nathanson, Senator Hass and all the members of the Joint Committee on Tax Expenditure,

AllCare Health would strongly urge the committee to pass the cigarette and vaping tax referral know as HB 2270. If this bill and subsequent ballot measure were able to pass it would result in a significant positive impact to Oregon's health system and the overall health of Oregonians.

The funds raised through this increase in the Cigarette and Vaping Tax would largely be dedicated funding for the Oregon Health Plan (OHP). OHP (Medicaid) is funded by state dollars being matched by federal funds and the match from the federal government is significant. On average, for every dollar that the State of Oregon spends on OHP the federal government sends Oregon three dollars in return. By the implementing this cigarette and vaping tax and dedicating it to OHP, not only does this create more stability for the Oregon Health Plan but it also gets billions of our federal tax dollars back into Oregon.

The Oregon Health Plan gives medical insurance to nearly one-fourth of Oregonians so stabilizing its funding is incredibly important to the OHP members, but it actually will have a huge benefit to all Oregonians. At AllCare Health we offer myriad of services to help people quit smoking including one-on-one sessions and cover all nicotine replacement therapy products. AllCare Health offers community workshop and groups that are also open to our community, not just our members. AllCare Health's cessation councilors also do presentations to help people quit in the community at local A & D centers, temporary housing facilities, veterans centers, and hospitals just to name a few.

Another benefit is the dedicated funding will help our locally based CCOs continue investments in long term health improvement projects in partnership with community groups and schools. A great example comes from southern Oregon where CCOs have invested in an evidence based teacher/student program (PAX/Good Behavior Game) that has been shown to significantly reduce teen smoking (along with helping reduce teen drug use and attempted suicide).

The Cigarette and Vaping Tax will help leverage hundreds of millions of federal dollars help pay for programs to help Oregonians stop smoking and, in the end, make for a healthier Oregon.

Please support HB 2270.

Sincerely,



Josh Balloch
AllCare Health, Vice President