



PRISM



HEALTH

DATE: June 17, 2019
TO: Joint Committee on Tax Expenditures
FROM: Cascade AIDS Project, Prism Health
RE: Support for House Bill 2270-A

Co-Chairs Hass and Nathanson and Members of the Committee:

For the record my name is Courtney Helstein and on behalf of the Cascade AIDS Project and Prism Health, I encourage this committee's support for House Bill 2270-A.

Cascade AIDS Project, Oregon's largest and oldest AIDS Service organization, has been providing services to individuals living with or affected by HIV for 35 years. Prism Health is our LGBTQ+ focused primary care clinic that provides the community with the safe and affirming health care that they need and deserve.

Collectively our mission is to support and empower all people with or affected by HIV, reduce stigma, and provide the LGBTQ+ community with compassionate healthcare. Prism Health currently serves approximately 1,000 LGBTQ+ individuals with the capacity to serve up to 6,000 patients. Cascade AIDS Project provides services and outreach to nearly 7,000 Oregonians impacted by HIV every year.

Through our work, we have seen the impact tobacco has on the health of individual clients and the LGTBQ+ community overall. Nearly one in three LGBT adults smoke, a rate that is more than 50% higher than other adults.¹ LGB high school students use tobacco products at a rate of 40.5%, including 19.2% who smoke, which is twice the rate of other students. Transgender youth smoke at a rate of 31%.² Smoking results in significant health disparities and kills 30,000+ LGBT people per year.³

Tobacco companies have targeted communities of color, tribes, low-income, and LGBTQ communities for decades in their advertising campaigns and now youth with e-cigarette campaigns.⁴ It's time to ensure that these communities are supported well enough so that when people are ready to quit, there are resources for them to do so.

This legislation will provide \$346 million dollars per biennia for the Oregon Health Plan, which provides health care for nearly 1 million of the most vulnerable Oregonians, as well as meaningful investments in community and culturally specific programs to address prevention and cessation of tobacco and nicotine.

Thank you for your consideration and I urge your support for HB 2270-a.

With gratitude,

Courtney Helstein

¹ https://www.lgbthealthlink.org/Assets/U/Documents/FactSheets/tobacco-use-lgbt-communities_august2017_v2.pdf

² <https://www.lgbthealthlink.org/Assets/U/Documents/FactSheets/tobacco-use-among-lgbt-youth.pdf>

³ Ibid

⁴ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3222279/>