

February 4, 2020

Oregon State Legislature
House Committee on Health Care
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

Re: House Bill 4038 – Electronic Cigarette Remote Sales Ban

Chair Salinas and members of the House Committee on Health Care:

On behalf of Oregon's 62 community hospitals and the patients they serve, the Oregon Association of Hospitals and Health Systems (OAHS) supports HB 4038, which bans remote sales of electronic cigarettes. Hospitals have been on the front lines the past six months confronting the outbreak of Electronic cigarette and Vaping Associated Lung Injury (EVALI). Oregon has seen 23 cases, two of which were fatal. These cases include a mix of cannabis-only vaping, nicotine-only vaping and a combination of both. No one product type has been identified as the sole cause of EVALI.

Addressing electronic cigarettes and tobacco takes a comprehensive and multi-faceted approach to prevent initiation and help people quit. Unfortunately, electronic cigarette use is on the rise among Oregon youth, which can lead to a lifetime of nicotine addiction. Over 50% of youth who use tobacco first start with electronic cigarettes.¹

Youth obtain tobacco and electronic cigarettes from many sources including social sources and online. While current law restricts mail, telephone or Internet sales of combustible cigarettes, loose tobacco and smokeless tobacco, electronic cigarettes remain a loophole. Hundreds of online stores sell electronic cigarettes, and most use the honor-system for verifying age requirements. This provides an access point for youth to purchase a variety of flavored, cheap nicotine products.

HB 4078 adds electronic cigarettes to the current Oregon remote sales ban and is an important policy tool for limiting youth access to addictive products. We urge you to support HB 4078.

Thank you,



Sean Kolmer
Senior Vice President of Policy and Strategy
Oregon Association of Hospitals and Health Systems

¹ Oregon Health Authority Public Health Division, Health Promotion and Chronic Disease Prevention Section. 2018. Oregon tobacco facts. Available at: <https://apps.state.or.us/Forms/Served/le9139.pdf>