



April 26, 2021

Members of the Oregon Senate Health Care Committee

From: Americans for Tax Reform

Dear Representative,

On behalf of Americans for Tax Reform (ATR) and our supporters across Oregon, **I urge you to oppose HB 2261**, harmful legislation that would restrict access to lifesaving reduced harm tobacco products like electronic cigarettes and keep people smoking – and dying from – traditional combustible cigarettes. **If enacted, this anti-science bill would have a disastrous impact upon not only businesses, but also on public health throughout the state, and lead to an increase in tobacco-related deaths.**

We would also like to draw the committee's attention to the fact that HB 2261, which includes a prohibition on online or remote sales, would significantly reduce access to these life-saving products, and particularly harm smokers trying to quit who reside in rural and remote areas of the state. **If enacted, these persons, often in lower socioeconomic demographics and at the highest risk of smoking related mortality, would have no choice but to continue smoking – and dying from - combustible tobacco.**

About E-Cigarettes and Vapor Products:

- Traditional combustible tobacco remains one of the leading preventable causes of death in Oregon. **The negative health effects of combustible tobacco come from the chemicals produced in the combustion process, not the nicotine.** While highly addictive, nicotine is a relatively benign substance like caffeine and nicotine use “does not result in clinically significant short- or long-term harms”.
- Nicotine replacement therapies such as nicotine patches and gums have helped smokers quit for decades. In recent years, advancements in technology have created a more effective alternative: **vapor products and e-cigarettes. These products deliver nicotine through water vapor, mimicking the habitual nature of smoking while removing the deadly carcinogens that exist in traditional cigarettes.**

Benefits of E-Cigarettes and Vapor Products:

- Vapor products have been **proven to be 95% safer** than combustible cigarettes and **twice as effective** at helping smokers quit than traditional nicotine replacement therapies.
- Vaping has been endorsed by over 30 of the world's leading **public health organizations** as safer than smoking and an effective way to help smokers quit.
- Just last week, a new **analysis** by Public Health England demonstrated just how effective vaping is in helping people quit smoking, noting that in just one year, over 50,000 British smokers, who would have continued smoking otherwise, quit smoking with vaping.
- **Studies have repeatedly shown that flavors, which HB 2261 would restrict access to, are critical to helping adult smokers make the switch to vaping.** Adults who use

722 12th Street N.W.

Fourth Floor

Washington, D.C.

20005

T: (202) 785-0266

F: (202) 785-0261

www.atr.org

flavored vapor products are **43% more likely to quit smoking** than an adult who uses un-flavored products, according to a recent [study](#) from ten of the world's top experts in cancer prevention and public health.

- A University of Glasgow study showed that e-cigarettes particularly [help disadvantaged](#) persons quit smoking. **HB 2261 will have a tremendously negative impact on public health and would increase socioeconomic disparities significantly.**
- Evidence demonstrates that **flavors play no role in youth uptake of vaping**. Academic studies have found that teenage non-smokers “willingness to try plain versus flavored varieties did not differ” and a mere 5% of vapers aged 14-23 reported it was flavors that drew them to e-cigarettes. National Youth Tobacco Survey results have shown [no increase in nicotine dependency](#) among youths since flavored products entered the market.
- **Vapor products would save over [85,000 lives](#) if a majority of Oregon smokers made the switch to vaping**, extrapolating from a large-scale analysis performed by leading cancer researchers and coordinated by Georgetown University Medical Centre.

In the interests of public health, we call upon the committee to **accept the science and vote against HB 2261**. Tens of thousands of lives quite literally depend on it.

Sincerely,

Tim Andrews
Director of Consumer Issues
Americans for Tax Reform