

Senate Committee On Early Childhood and Behavioral Health
Oregon State Senate
900 Court St. NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

RE: Support for Senate Bill 702

Dear Chair Reynolds, Vice Chair Anderson, and members of the Committee:

I'm writing to you today as a lifetime Oregon resident and a victim of Big tobacco's constant targeting of Oregon's children. As you know, Smoking is the leading cause of preventable death and disease in Oregon, and nearly all tobacco use begins during youth and young adulthood. According to pediatricians, cigarette smoking sets kids up for a lifetime of nicotine addiction and serious health conditions like heart disease and lung disease. E-cigarettes are the most popular tobacco product among Oregon teens, with over 10% of 11th graders using them in the past month. 1 E-cigarette can deliver doses of nicotine much higher than an average cigarette, which puts youth users at greater risk for addiction. Tobacco companies knowingly market harmful products to young users. Flavored products like cool mint, watermelon ice, and cotton candy attract and hook new young users. These tactics are working: nearly 90% of youth e-cigarette users use flavored products. 2 Additionally, Big Tobacco has used flavored products to target communities of color for decades. Menthol cigarettes make it easier for young people to start smoking, are more addictive and harder to quit. Ending the sale of flavored tobacco products is a reasonable step to take to protect the health of Oregon kids – and that's why we urge Oregon legislators to pass Senate Bill 702.

Best, Lauren Cox