

February 28, 2025

Senate Committee on Early Childhood and Behavioral Health
900 Court St. NE, S-409
Salem, OR 97301

Re: Support for SB 702

Dear Chair Reynolds and members of the Senate Committee on Early Childhood and Behavioral Health,

I am a mother, nurse, and Stroke Program Coordinator and Legacy Mount Hood Medical Center (LMHMC) in Gresham. I strongly support SB 702 to end the sale of all flavored tobacco products in Oregon. As a mother, and former aid and substitute in the Estacada School District, I have seen the damage these flavored products have had on our children and teenagers locally and personally. It is difficult for a teen to hide smoking cigarettes as the smell alone would give it away. However, e-cigarettes, with flavored tobacco are not easily recognized. They don't need to take it out, light it up, and smoke. They can simply take a drag (or whatever they call it these days) and throw it back in their backpacks without anyone noticing.

As a nurse and coordinator of the Stroke Program at LMHMC, I see firsthand the effects of tobacco. The 2024 data for our hospital alone shows of the total number of patients who received a stroke diagnosis, 61% of those had a history of smoking. This is not a surprise since we already know from numerous studies that smoking is a modifiable risk factor for stroke. However, 70.9% of our stroke patients were less than 70 years old and 25.4% were less than 60 years old. Less than retirement age. Of those less than 60 years old who had strokes, 64.8% of those patients had a history of smoking. Nearly 12% of the total number of stroke patients in 2024 at LMHMC were 50 years or younger and 52% of those patients had a smoking history. These are only the patients at our relatively small Primary Stroke Center. People are having strokes at younger ages. These people are not just numbers, they are your friends and neighbors and their children.

A study performed by Dr Patel, et al. (May 2022), provided data comparing e-cigarette and traditional smoking and their association with stroke. The study found that e-cigarette smokers had early onset of stroke in comparison with traditional smokers (median age: 48 vs 59 years; $p < 0.0001$). Among the populations included in the study, prevalence of e-cigarette use was higher among women, Mexican Americans and other Hispanics. The study concluded that even though stroke was more prevalent in traditional smokers, the incidence of stroke was "early-in-onset and was strongly associated with e-cigarette use compared to traditional smokers. We have also identified vascular effects of e-cigarettes components as possible triggers for the stroke."

With this information in hand, I strongly support the ban on flavored tobacco products that specifically market and target younger populations, including children and teenagers. Our public health system is already overburdened by the care of the stroke population and the needs presented by stroke patients. While this may not fully eradicate the issue, it may prevent some people from ever starting a smoking habit that may lead to stroke or other cardiovascular diseases. The devastating nature of strokes is not always in an untimely death, it is often in a debilitating life and the ongoing deficits a person may have because of their stroke.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter and for your work in writing and proposing this legislation. I feel it is valuable and I strongly support it, hoping it will save lives.

Thank you,

Jaime Crandell, RN-BSN
Mom, Nurse and Stroke Coordinator; Legacy Mount Hood Medical Center

References:

Patel U, Patel N, Khurana M, Parulekar A, Patel A, Ortiz JF, Patel R, Urhoghide E, Mistry A, Bhriguvanshi A, Abdulqader M, Mehta N, Arumaithurai K, Shah S. Effect Comparison of E-Cigarette and Traditional Smoking and Association with Stroke-A Cross-Sectional Study of NHANES. *Neurol Int.* 2022 May 27;14(2):441-452. doi: 10.3390/neurolint14020037. PMID: 35736618; PMCID: PMC9227824.

[Effect Comparison of E-Cigarette and Traditional Smoking and Association with Stroke-A Cross-Sectional Study of NHANES - PubMed](#)