



March 03, 2025

RE: Testimony Opposing SB 702

Chair and members of the committee, my name is Cody Payne, and I am a responsible distributor in Oregon. I am here today to strongly oppose SB 702, which would ban the sale of flavored tobacco products—even to legal adults over 21.

We all share the goal of preventing youth tobacco use, and we are making real progress. National smoking rates are at historic lows—just 1.3% among youth and 10.8% among adults. This progress has been achieved through regulation, enforcement, and education—not prohibition.

SB 702 will not stop tobacco use, but it will drive it underground. When legal products are banned, an illegal and unregulated market will take their place—one where no I.D.s are checked, smuggling increases, and criminal activity grows. Instead of protecting public health, prohibition will create new problems for law enforcement and the justice system.

This ban also threatens businesses, jobs, and critical tax revenue. In Oregon, menthol cigarettes alone make up 17.4% of the market. Small businesses, convenience stores, and distributors will suffer, and the loss in state excise tax revenue will impact important programs that rely on these funds.

We believe there is a better way forward: harm reduction. The FDA already regulates tobacco products, and there is substantial scientific evidence that smoke-free alternatives can help adult smokers move away from combustible cigarettes. Instead of prohibition, policymakers should focus on keeping these products regulated, ensuring they remain out of the hands of youth, while providing adult smokers with the choices and information they need.

I urge you to reject SB 702 and pursue solutions that work—without the unintended consequences of prohibition.

Thank you,

A simple, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Cody Payne".

Cody Payne



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