



Mar 4, 2025

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:

Beyond Toxics strongly supports SB 702 and ending the sale of flavored tobacco in Oregon. At Beyond Toxics, we provide leadership to build a community-driven environmental justice movement for a thriving and just Oregon. We have a long history of advocacy to reduce toxics in Oregon to protect public health, particularly for vulnerable communities. Flavored tobacco and disposable e-cigarettes conflict with all that we stand for.

The environmental impact of cigarettes has been well established, with trillions of pollutant-containing cigarette butts being discarded annually, but e-cigarettes pose a potentially even more dangerous threat.<sup>1</sup> As of 2023, the CDCF estimates that U.S. consumers purchase 11.9 million disposable e-cigarettes per month, with the vast majority being flavored products.<sup>2</sup> As of September 2024, the CCDF found that 95% of disposable vape sales nationwide are flavored, and it's even worse in Oregon—98.2%.<sup>3</sup>

These e-cigarettes are often only used for a couple of days before being discarded – leading to potentially devastating environmental impacts. The EPA considers e-cigarettes as hazardous waste due to both the nicotine content and their lithium batteries, which have a high potential for leaching heavy metals into our environment.<sup>4</sup> Highly flammable, lithium batteries pose not just a pollutant risk, but a fire-starting risk when not disposed of properly. In a state fighting regular wildfires, this poses a significant danger to our forests. Unfortunately, when polled in 2021, only 15% of respondents sent their disposable vapes to an electronic recycling facility, while the majority of respondents threw them into the regular trash.<sup>2</sup>

The chemical byproducts from e-cigarettes contaminate wastewater, landfills, and urban storm drains. This finds its way through water systems, poisoning our waterways and ecosystems. Most of us live in

Oregon for its natural beauty, and it's our responsibility to protect it. Please vote yes on SB 702 and protect both the health of our community and our environment.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Eisele  
Beyond Toxics

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1 Beutel, Marc W., Thomas C. Harmon, Thomas E. Novotny, Jeremiah Mock, Michelle E. Gilmore, Stephen C. Hart, Samuel Traina, Srimanti Dutttagupta, Andrew Brooks, Christopher L. Jerde, and et al. 2021. "A Review of Environmental Pollution from the Use and Disposal of Cigarettes and Electronic Cigarettes: Contaminants, Sources, and Impacts" *Sustainability* 13, no. 23: 12994. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su132312994>

2 "A Toxic, Plastic Problem: E-Cigarette Waste and the Environment," Truth Initiative, March 8, 2021, <https://truthinitiative.org/research-resources/harmful-effects-tobacco/toxic-plastic-problem-e-cigarette-waste-and-environment>.

3 "National Data." Monitoring Tobacco Product Use, May 13, 2024. <https://tobacomonitoring.org/national/>.

4 "How to Safely Dispose of E-Cigarettes: Information for Individuals." EPA, February 14, 2025. <https://www.epa.gov/hw/how-safely-dispose-e-cigarettes-information-individuals#:~:text=E%2Dcigarettes%20contain%20nicotine%20and%20lithium%20batteries%2C%20making%20them%20hazardous,breathing%2C%20fainting%2C%20or%20seizures>.