

## MEMORANDUM

To: Chair Reynolds, Vice Chair Anderson, and members of the Senate Committee On Early Childhood and Behavioral Health

From: Marty Carty, Governmental Affairs Director, Oregon Primary Care Association

Date: February 26, 2025

Re: Support SB 702

---

At the Oregon Primary Care Association, our mission is to transform primary health care through a community-centered, community-driven approach. Federally Qualified Health Centers throughout the state regularly see the negative, and deadly, impacts of tobacco and nicotine products. Smoking is the leading cause of preventable death in Oregon, affecting 5,500 people annually.<sup>1</sup> We can prevent deaths – and many chronic health conditions – by ending the sale of all flavored tobacco in products in Oregon.

Reducing tobacco use requires a multifaceted approach that prevents youth and young adults from initiating tobacco use and eliminates tobacco-related health disparities in all populations. The tobacco industry uses flavored products to hook youth into a lifetime of addiction: 95% of adults who smoke report they started smoking before age 21 and 88% of youth e-cigarette users use flavored products.<sup>23</sup> Additionally, Big Tobacco has targeted Black Americans with campaigns to promote menthol cigarettes. Menthol cigarettes make it easier for young people to start smoking, are more addictive and harder to quit.

Senate Bill 702 is a necessary step to combat the danger that is nicotine addiction in Oregon. Please take action to protect Oregon's children and communities from a lifetime of nicotine addiction and serious health conditions like heart disease and lung disease. We strongly support SB 702 to end the sale of flavored tobacco in Oregon and urge your yes vote.

Sincerely,

Marty Carty  
Governmental Affairs Director

---

<sup>1</sup> Toll of Tobacco in Oregon, Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids

<sup>2</sup> Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. National Survey on Drug Use and Health, 2014

<sup>3</sup> Results from the 2024 Annual National Youth Tobacco Survey | FDA

**The Oregon Primary Care Association (OPCA) is the nonprofit membership organization for the state's 34 federally qualified health centers (FQHCs). OPCA member clinics deliver comprehensive, culturally responsive integrated medical, dental, and behavioral health services for traditionally underserved communities. As a unifying voice of Oregon's FQHCs, OPCA drives transformative policy development to advance health equity across the state and beyond.**

**[www.orpca.org](http://www.orpca.org)**