

Hello Chair Reynolds, Vice Chair Anderson, members of the committee my name is Safa Daher, and I am writing you today on behalf of Upstream Public Health & The Tobacco Free Coalition of Oregon to support Senate Bill 702 to end the sale of flavored commercial tobacco products.

As a teen, I strongly support SB702 because in my community, flavored tobacco products are everywhere, especially among youth. Exotic flavors like cotton candy, mango, and blue raspberry make vaping and smoking seem harmless and fun, but in reality, they are a trap set by tobacco companies to get teens hooked. These flavors mask the harshness of nicotine, making it easier for young people to start using and harder for them to quit. What many don't realize is that vaping, smoking tobacco, and using hookah can lead to serious health problems like lung cancer, heart disease, and long-term respiratory issues. The sweet and fruity flavors trick teens into thinking these products are safer, but they still contain dangerous chemicals that damage the lungs and brain. Nicotine addiction at a young age can also affect brain development, leading to memory and concentration problems. By banning flavored tobacco through SB702, Oregon has the opportunity to remove these harmful products from our streets, protect our youth from addiction, and prevent lifelong health issues.