

Hello my name is Aziza Abdirisag and I am here in support of Senate Bill 702 and would like to address Chair Reynolds, Vice Chair Anderson, and members of the committee.

I am an Oregonian living in Southeast Portland, and I have been exposed to tobacco and hookah for as long as I can remember. Whether it was going on walks with my aunt or even in the comfort of my own home, I couldn't escape it. As I got older, exposure to smoking didn't stop—it only changed.

In school, vapes became impossible to avoid. Classmates would sneak hits in the bathrooms, hallways, and even during class when teachers weren't looking. It felt like everyone around me was doing it, making it seem normal, even expected. Outside of school, it was no different. At weddings and family gatherings, I would see younger relatives and family friends, some barely in their early teens, eagerly waiting for older aunts to leave the bathroom just so they could sneak in and vape. They acted like it was a game, laughing and whispering as they took turns, thinking no one noticed. It was clear that vaping wasn't just something happening in schools—it had become part of everyday life, even within my own community.

Tobacco and hookah has had an increasing impact on my life and my goal is to put a stop to the exposure and normalization of it. And I highly agree with Upstream Public Health and the Tobacco Free Coalition of Oregon's movement because I think there needs to be a change in my generation and in society.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to share my experience. I strongly urge the committee to support Senate Bill 702