

Submitter: Wendy Hasson

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Early Childhood and Behavioral Health

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB702

Dear Chair Reynolds and Members of the Committee,

As a pediatrician and pediatric ICU physician practicing in Portland OR, I strongly urge you to support Senate Bill 702, which seeks to prohibit the sale of all flavored tobacco products. This legislation is a critical step in protecting the health and well-being of Oregon's children and adolescents.

Flavored tobacco products, including menthol cigarettes and flavored e-cigarettes, are deliberately marketed to young people, enticing them into nicotine addiction. As a physician, I have seen firsthand the devastating impact of early tobacco use, from respiratory issues to long-term addiction. As an ICU doctor, I have seen many adolescents affected by Vaping- Associated Lung Injury (VALI), which can, and has, been deadly. This disease, caused by vaping, results in profound lung injury. For those who survive, they are often on a ventilator for weeks and have a long road to recovery. Many of them will spend to years regaining the lung capacity they once had, limiting their ability to play sports or sometimes even engage in routine school gym class. The developing brains of children and teenagers are particularly vulnerable to nicotine, which can impair cognitive function, increase susceptibility to addiction, and set the stage for lifelong health complications.

Restrictions on the sale of flavored tobacco have been enacted in other states with amazing results. Not only has e-cigarette use dramatically declined, but combustible cigarette use also declines.

By passing SB 702, Oregon can take a meaningful stand against youth tobacco use and safeguard public health. I urge you to prioritize the well-being of our children over the interests of the tobacco industry and vote in favor of this bill.

Thank you for your time and commitment to protecting Oregon's youth.

Sincerely,
Wendy Hasson MD