



Date: March 6, 2025

To: Senate Committee On Early Childhood and Behavioral Health

From: Oregon Health Equity Alliance (OHEA)

RE: Support SB 702

Dear Chair Reynolds, Vice Chair Anderson, and members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Oregon Health Equity Alliance (OHEA) we are writing to support SB 702 a ban on the sales of flavored tobacco products.

OHEA is a people of color-led collaborative, organized to center and uplift the wisdom of our communities of color through racial justice informed health equity policies and practices. OHEA serves Clackamas, Multnomah, and Washington counties as one of ten regional health equity coalitions across Oregon.

Smoking is the leading cause of preventable death and disease in Oregon, and nearly all tobacco use begins during youth and young adulthood. According to pediatricians, cigarette smoking sets kids up for a lifetime of nicotine addiction and serious health conditions like heart disease and lung disease.

E-cigarettes are the most popular tobacco product among Oregon teens, with over 10% of 11th graders using them in the past month.¹ E-cigarettes can deliver massive doses of nicotine, which put youth users at greater risk for addiction. Tobacco companies knowingly market harmful products to young users. Flavored products like cool mint, watermelon ice, and cotton candy attract and hook new young users. These tactics are working: nearly 90% of youth e-cigarette users use flavored products.²

Additionally, Big Tobacco has used flavored products to target communities of color for decades. Menthol cigarettes make it easier for young people to start smoking, are more addictive and harder to quit. Ending the sale of flavored tobacco products is a reasonable step to take to protect the health of Oregon kids – and that’s why we urge Oregon legislators to pass Senate Bill 702.

¹ Oregon Health Authority, Oregon Student Health Survey.

² Results from the 2024 Annual National Youth Tobacco Survey



Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Oregon Health Equity Alliance