

## **Support for Senate Bill 702 – Restricting the Sale of Flavored Tobacco Products**

Dear Chair Reynolds and Members of the Committee,

As a pediatrician 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.

As a physician who practices in a range of acuity settings, from the clinic to the intensive care unit, I have seen the devastating impact that nicotine and tobacco products have on our youth. I frequently see adolescents who are addicted to these products, requiring nicotine patches or gum during their hospital stay because they cannot go even a day without using these products. These products are easy to obtain and easy to hide from their parents. Our sports fields are full of Zyn wrappers, which is especially concerning, as we have seen children hospitalized from the effect of using nicotine products while exercising.

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. 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.

The vast majority (~90%) of adults who use tobacco/nicotine products start using them before the age of 18. By restricting children's access to these products, we can prevent another generation from falling into this cycle of addiction and subsequently decrease the demand for these products among adults in the future.

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,

Dr. Geena May