



May 20, 2025

Oregon State Legislature
Senate Committee on Early Childhood and Behavioral Health
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Support for Senate Bill 702A, Relating to public health

Dear Chair Meek, Vice Chair McLane, and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the more than 55,000 members and supporters of the Sierra Club Oregon Chapter, we write in support of Senate Bill 702A, which would significantly restrict the sale of flavored tobacco products in Oregon. This bill is a critical step in preventing Big Tobacco from targeting children and historically marginalized communities with flavored tobacco products such as candy-flavored e-cigarettes, menthol cigarettes, and fruit-flavored cigars that are well-documented as the number one cause of preventable death in the United States.

Sierra Club Oregon also supports SB 702A because tobacco use and production are environmental justice issues, and tobacco product disposal causes significant environmental damage. Tobacco farming depletes soil, contributes to deforestation, and exposes workers to harmful pesticides. The waste generated by cigarette butts and e-cigarette pods is a major source of plastic pollution, harming wildlife and ecosystems across Oregon.

SB 702A takes important steps to reduce youth access to flavored tobacco by limiting the sale of these products to licensed OLCC liquor stores, which prohibit entry to individuals under 21 unless accompanied by a parent. This will reduce the number of retail license holders from over 2,800 to approximately 282—likely fewer if pending court rulings are upheld—and create stronger safeguards against underage purchases. It also establishes regulatory authority over nicotine pouches, such as Zyn, including unflavored versions, and affirms the ability of local jurisdictions to ban flavored tobacco entirely.

Flavored tobacco products disproportionately harm communities that are already facing environmental and economic burdens. By eliminating easy access to these products, Oregon can reduce the impact of tobacco-related health issues and lessen the environmental pollution caused by tobacco waste such as cigarette butts, particularly in historically underserved communities.

Eighty-one percent of children who've used tobacco start with flavored products and eighty-nine percent of e-cigarette users use flavored products. We cannot deny the direct relationship between flavored tobacco products and the use of e-cigarettes which are becoming an ever larger source of e-waste in Oregon.

Ending the widespread availability of flavored tobacco and e-cigarette products is a necessary step to protect the health of Oregon's kids, reduce health inequities, and prevent further environmental harm. I urge you to support SB 702A for the health of our communities and the future of our environment.

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SIERRA CLUB
OREGON CHAPTER

Respectfully submitted,

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