

Submitter: Rupinder Kaur

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Finance and Revenue

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB702

My name is Rupinder Kaur, and I am here to testify in strong opposition to the proposed bill that would prohibit the distribution, sale, or offering of flavored inhalant delivery systems and flavored tobacco products in the state of Oregon, except through a narrow set of licensed premises regulated by the Oregon Liquor and Cannabis Commission and the Department of Revenue.

While I fully support efforts to reduce youth access to tobacco and vaping products, I believe this bill takes the wrong approach—one that will ultimately do more harm than good.

First, this bill significantly infringes on adult consumer choice. Adults over the age of 21 have the legal right to purchase and use tobacco and nicotine products, including flavored varieties. These products are not marketed to children in licensed stores, and responsible retailers already follow strict ID verification processes. Banning flavors entirely punishes law-abiding adults rather than addressing the issue of underage access directly.

Second, the economic consequences of this bill will be severe. Many small, family-owned businesses across Oregon—such as convenience stores and vape shops—rely on the sale of flavored tobacco products to stay afloat. These businesses are already heavily regulated and taxed. If the bill passes, it will likely lead to closures, job losses, and reduced state tax revenue, all while opening the door for black-market sales that are unregulated and unsafe.

Third, history has shown that prohibition does not eliminate demand—it pushes it underground. Similar bans in other states have resulted in increased illegal sales and no meaningful decline in youth use. A more effective strategy would be to invest in enforcement of existing age-restriction laws, provide youth education, and support cessation programs for those trying to quit.

Finally, this bill may unintentionally target and harm communities of color. For example, menthol products—which would be banned under this legislation—are disproportionately used by certain communities. A sweeping ban would risk alienating these communities without offering the public health support needed to make lasting change.

In closing, I urge the committee to consider the real-world impact of this legislation—not just on public health goals, but on personal freedom, small business survival, and

community equity. We can and should address youth tobacco use through smarter, more targeted approaches that don't harm adults or destroy local economies.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I respectfully ask that you vote no on this bill.