

February 11, 2026

Senate Committee on Judiciary
900 Court St. NE, S-409
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Support for SB 1571

Dear Chair Prozanski, Vice-Chair Thatcher, and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary,

Kaiser Permanente strongly supports SB 1571 which would protect Oregon kids by closing the loophole that leaves nicotine pouch products, like Zyn, unregulated.

Kaiser Permanente exists to provide high-quality, affordable health care services and to improve the health of our members and the communities we serve. We serve more than 616,000 members in Oregon and Southwest Washington that access coverage through a variety of plans spanning the commercial, Medicaid and Medicare markets.

As the nation's largest nonprofit integrated health care system, Kaiser Permanente is working to address upstream contributors to poor public health.

Kaiser Permanente physicians and other practitioners routinely caution patients, especially youth and their parents and guardians, about the harmful effects of tobacco and nicotine products. Nicotine pouches promote youth initiation of tobacco use by using flavors to reduce or mask the natural harshness of nicotine. To ensure the future health of our communities, we must help young people avoid becoming hooked on these addictive products.

In Oregon, tobacco remains the leading cause of preventable death. Reducing tobacco use requires a multifaceted approach, starting with preventing youth and young adults from initiating any nicotine use. The rapidly growing use of tobacco and nicotine products among our nation's youth is one of the most critical public health issues currently facing our country. Taking decisive action to reduce tobacco and nicotine use – especially by youth – will improve the health and longevity of Oregonians.

Right now, Oregon does not have a state law that restricts the sale of nicotine pouches – even for kids. Nicotine pouches, such as Zyn, must be properly regulated just like other smokeless tobacco products, cigarettes, e-cigarettes and vapes, and cigars – SB 1571 will do just that.

Nicotine exposure during adolescence can harm the developing brain, which continues to develop until about age 25, and can impact learning, memory, attention span, and impulse control, for life.

Nicotine pouches are addicting kids in both urban and rural areas at alarming rates, but youth in rural areas show significantly higher pouch use and are even more at risk. And nicotine pouch products are proving to be on ramp for women and girls trying nicotine by placing it under the lip, for the very first time. Almost one quarter of adolescents who have tried Zyn are girls. That would be inconceivable with traditional chewing tobacco. It is a product that is not only addicting youth but also allowing the tobacco industry to cross gender barriers, and not in a good way.

It is time for Oregon to protect kids and close the loophole that leaves nicotine pouches unregulated. SB 1571 will do just that, and we urge you to support the bill.

Sincerely,



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Northwest Permanente, PC
Medical Director, External Affairs, Government Relations and Community Health