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Senate Bill will drastically decrease access to flavored tobacco in Oregon

Committee hears testimony from health advocates and students

SALEM, OR – On Wednesday, the [Senate Committee on Finance and Revenue](#) heard testimony from health experts, youth advocates, and community organizations advocating for [SB 702 A](#), which would protect kids by dramatically reducing access to flavored tobacco products in Oregon.

“Products like candy-flavored e-cigarettes, minty menthol cigarettes, and dessert-flavored little cigars are starter products the tobacco industry uses to lure kids,” said Heidi Low from the [Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids](#). “These products are fueling our state's youth nicotine addiction crisis, and we must do all we can to get rid of them.”

SB 702 A would limit the sale of flavored tobacco products to OLCC-licensed liquor stores, where customers must be over age 21 to enter. Corner stores, mini marts, vape shops and other tobacco retailers would be prohibited from selling flavored tobacco products. This would reduce the number of retailers that can sell these products from the more than 2,800 current tobacco retail license holders to 151 OLCC-licensed liquor stores that also hold tobacco retail licenses.

“Studies consistently show that tobacco use is higher in areas with more retailers,” said Dr. Pamela Trangenstein, a scientist at the [Alcohol Research Group of the Public Health Institute](#). “This is important because reducing use and early initiation can lower long-term public health expenditures and workforce productivity losses associated with tobacco use.”

In Oregon, tobacco use is the leading cause of preventable death and disease, killing more than 8,000 people each year. More than 80% of kids who have used tobacco started with a flavored product, and nearly 90% of youth e-cigarette users report using flavored products.

“As high school students, we see first-hand the proliferation of flavored nicotine products among youth. They are everywhere,” said Julian Guerra Molina, Chair of the [Oregon City Youth Advisory Commission](#). “As minors, we look to the legislature – the adults in the room – to protect kids from these dangerous products. Please pass this legislation.”

[Flavors Hook Oregon Kids](#) is a statewide coalition of more than 60 organizations focused on protecting the health of Oregon kids by ending the sale of flavored tobacco products.

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