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Marina BAKER <marina.baker@multco.us>

Re: January 27, 2015 Public Hearing-Written Testimony

Lynda GROW <lynda.grow@multco.us>

Mon, Jan 26, 2015 at 2:56 PM

To: Nafisa Fai <nafisa@upstreampublichealth.org>, Marina BAKER <marina.baker@multco.us>, Lynda GROW <lynda.grow@multco.us>, Nancy BENNETT <nancy.bennett@multco.us>

Thank you. We have received your testimony and will make sure it gets distributed.

On Mon, Jan 26, 2015 at 2:23 PM, Nafisa Fai <nafisa@upstreampublichealth.org> wrote:

January 26, 2015

Dear Chair Kafoury and members of Multnomah County Commissioners,

We applaud your leadership to address the threats of tobacco and nicotine use in Multnomah County. We, the undersigned community and public health leaders, wholeheartedly support your considerations of policies to better protect youth from tobacco and nicotine. By setting this forward thinking proposal regulating who can sell and buy electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes), nicotine delivery (dispensing) devices, and tobacco products you set a sensible foundation for preventing tobacco and nicotine use among our youth. By updating the Indoor Clean Air Act to include e-cigarettes (or vaping), you are also establishing healthy community environments for all. We look forward to working with you and retailers to develop a balanced, common sense licensing system that protects small businesses while protecting community health.

The organizations represented in this letter believe that all youth deserve healthy environments where they live, work and play. We want everyone to have a chance to be healthy and live free from the dangers of tobacco and nicotine products. However, without strong regulatory oversight, Oregon will continue to struggle with high illegal sales of tobacco products to minors, preventing aspirations of healthier communities. We write to you to shift the paradigm surrounding e-cigarettes to have an age requirement of 18 years old and ban the practice of indoor use of e-cigarettes (or vaping) as well as requiring a license for retailers to sell tobacco/nicotine products.

The use of e-cigarettes is an uncharted territory. It is obvious that the campaign to recruit children to use these unregulated products is going strong. The marketing tactics include fruit and candy flavors such as cherry, chocolate, gummy bear, and bubble gum, that are specifically appealing to youth. What child could resist a name like "Silly Strawberry"? While we are continuing to learn about the health risks of e-cigarettes, research shows they are often the first nicotine product used by youth, who then begin smoking regular cigarettes. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the percent of US middle and high school students who used e-cigarettes have more than doubled from 2011 to 2012. The younger an individual is during their first experience with smoking, the more likely it is that he or she will become a regular smoker. In the US, more than 90% of adult smokers reported to have started smoking before the age of 18.

We have an obligation to protect the health of Multnomah County citizens, particularly youth and the vulnerable populations, from the harms of tobacco and nicotine use. We ask you to set an age restriction on the use of e-cigarettes, update the Indoor Clean Air Act and develop a retail licensing and enforcement system for all products containing nicotine.

Sincerely yours,

American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, Inc.
American Heart Association and American Stroke Association
Asian Health & Service Center
Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon
Center for Intercultural Organizing
One in Four Chronic Health
Oregon Health Equity Alliance
Oregon Latino Health Coalition
Oregon Nurses Association
Upstream Public Health
Urban League of Portland
We Can Do Better

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