



February 5, 2014

TO: Members of the House Committee on Human Services & Housing

RE: House Bill 4073

On behalf of the Oregon Neighborhood Store Association (ONSA), I wish to encourage your support of House Bill 4073. In the most basic terms, the provisions of HB 4073 serve to treat a vapor products (e-cigarettes) in a like manner to that of a traditional tobacco product. Thus, *containing nicotine; a determined addictive product*, an e-cigarette is to be placed on an equal standard to that of traditional tobacco products, with respect to use and access by minors. We believe this represents a positive direction regarding minors in Oregon.

Provisions of the measure serve to prohibit the distribution of defined vapor products to minors and additional provisions would:

- require retailers to maintain appropriate signage regarding sale of vapor products;
- provide for the inspection of Oregon retail establishments;
- prohibit the sale, distribution of vapor products to minors;
- prohibit a minor from purchasing or acquiring vapor products;
- prohibit the sale of vapor products through vending locations.

For reference, ONSA is a statewide association representing the interests of those engaged in the retail grocery industry, with a specific focus on independent, small convenience stores. There are approximately 2,900 convenience stores within Oregon.

With respect to issues associated with tobacco products and the access of minors to such products, ONSA has been a strong advocate and supporter of the “We Card” program. The We Card program represents a national program that for the past 17 years has been providing retailers with tools and training to prevent underage sales of tobacco products.

Inasmuch as the marketplace for electronic cigarettes is expanding, we believe efforts to address the potential use of vapor products by minors represent a prudent course of action for the State of Oregon. There are 11 states that already consider e-cigarettes an age-restricted product. Further, the Food & Drug Administration has indicated its intention to regulate e-cigarettes in the future. In response, the We Card program has taken steps to raise retailer awareness for responsibly selling e-cigarettes and increased attention to all laws regulating the sale of tobacco to minors.

ONSA fully supports the regulation of vapor products as outlined in HB 4073 and urges your approval of the bill.

Thank you.

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