

House Finance and Taxation Committee

HB 1570

February 12, 2025

Representative Craig Headland, Chair

Chairman Headland and Members of the House Finance and Taxation Committee, I am writing in support of HB 1570. For 17 years I have been educating youth on the negative effects of tobacco and nicotine use. Frequently, after elementary students hear how bad tobacco and nicotine use is, they ask why the government does not make cigarettes and vapes illegal. It is hard to explain to children why our government is not doing more to protect them. But, voting yes on HB 1570 is your chance to do more.

During student presentations I often ask students to raise their hands if they have ever been offered a vape. Last week I had approximately 22% of 3rd graders and 35% of 4th graders in one school report they had been offered vapes. Last fall, we had 2nd graders tell us that when they were in preschool they were offered vapes. Elementary students share a lot of stories with me, and what I hear is concerning. It is alarming and heartbreaking that youth are vaping at such young ages (or at all). Many of these flavorful products contain high levels of nicotine so they are very easy to get addicted to.

Raising the price of tobacco and nicotine products has been shown to decrease youth initiation of tobacco products. We need to do more to protect our youth from the harmful effects of tobacco and nicotine. Voting yes on HB 1570 is a step in the right direction. Thank you, chairman and committee, for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,
Sharon Laxdal, RN