



Oregon

Theodore R. Kulongoski, Governor

Department of Human Services

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Dear Community College Board Members and Administrators:

Thank you for considering the issue of tobacco use and secondhand smoke on your campuses. Preventing tobacco use, protecting people from secondhand smoke, and helping people quit are vital steps towards improving the health of Oregonians and the health of Oregon's economy. Tobacco continues to be the leading cause of death and disability in Oregon. Each year in Oregon almost 7000 people die from tobacco-related disease, and 800 Oregonians die from illnesses caused by secondhand smoke. Tobacco use costs Oregonians approximately \$2 billion annually in direct medical costs and indirect costs from lost productivity due to premature death and disability.



The Governor's proposed budget for 2007-2009 includes funding for the highly effective Tobacco Prevention and Education Program (TPEP). Those funds support community-based programs, media campaigns, the Oregon Tobacco Quit Line, school-based programs, and research and evaluation. Thanks to the dedicated work of TPEP staff, school personnel, and tobacco prevention partners such as the American Lung Association of Oregon, all K-12 students and staff now enjoy 100% tobacco-free campus environments. This work is now being expanded to support community colleges in adopting and implementing tobacco-free policies to yield similar benefits of healthier campus learning and work environments.

We take great pride in the accessibility of education and training available through Oregon's community colleges. I encourage your college to take one more step toward increased accessibility for all by prohibiting tobacco use on college property. Eliminating secondhand smoke has health benefits for all, and is especially important for individuals with asthma or other chronic lung or heart conditions that require avoiding exposure.

Again, thank you for taking the time to examine this important issue.

Sincerely,

Karen E. Girard, MPA
Tobacco Program Manager
Public Health Division

"Assisting People to Become Independent, Healthy and Safe"
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