

Analysis shows rapid rise in rate of youths vaping nicotine, marijuana

■ Data from the Oregon Health Authority show about 25% of Oregon 11th-graders reported vaping a nicotine product, and youth vaping has risen almost 80% in 2 years

East Oregonian

PORTLAND — While overall use of marijuana among Oregon youth has remained flat, the primary way they're using the substance — vaping — has dramatically increased, according to an Oregon Health Authority analysis.

The findings, which were released on Thursday, adds to evidence that vaping is subjecting many more youth to addiction. New data shows one in four Oregon 11th-graders reporting vaping a nicotine product, with youth use of e-cigarettes, such as Juul, increasing nearly 80% between 2017 and 2019. Marijuana use changed dramatically as well, according to the data, with youth shifting from smoking marijuana to vaping.

Youth vaping of marijuana increased 295% — from 11% to 44% among 11th-graders using marijuana between 2017 and 2019 — even as 11th-grade overall marijuana use stayed constant at 20%.

The data comes from Oregon Healthy Teens, a survey of middle- and high-school students that OHA administers every two years.

"This is alarming," said Dr. Dean Sidelinger, health officer and state epidemiologist for the OHA Public Health Division. "It confirms what we've long known — vaping is putting a new generation



Tony Dejak / Associated Press

Findings from the Oregon Health Authority adds to evidence that vaping is subjecting many more youth to addiction. New data show one in four Oregon 11th-graders reported vaping a nicotine product, with youth use of e-cigarettes, such as Juul, increasing nearly 80% between 2017 and 2019.

at risk for addiction. These products can get young people started on using nicotine and marijuana, and it is easy to get hooked."

OHT and the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, a survey the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention annually administers in partnership with states, both found that nicotine vaping products are most popular among children and young adults: 23% of 11th-grade students and 13% of young adults, ages 18 to 24, use

nicotine e-cigarettes versus just 3% of adults age 25 and older.

About half of Oregon high school students who currently use e-cigarettes report they never smoked conventional cigarettes — not even one time.

In Oregon, youth vaping overlaps with use of conventional tobacco and flavored tobacco products, the OHT analysis showed. More than half of Oregon eighth- and 11th-graders who use tobacco use flavored tobacco.

Roughly half of all youth who currently use conventional tobacco products started with vape products. Nearly two in five Oregon 11th-grade vape users also currently smoke conventional cigarettes.

A February 2019 study in the journal JAMA Network Open, one of the first studies to track youth e-cigarette users over time, found that young people who vape e-cigarettes are nearly three times as likely to start smoking cigarettes as peers who don't vape.

SUPPORTERS WANT TO GIVE VOTERS CHANCE TO REPEAL LAW ALLOWING UNDOCUMENTED IMMIGRANTS TO GET A DRIVER'S LICENSE

Campaign to repeal new state driver's license law hits a snag

By Claire Withycombe
Oregon Capital Bureau

SALEM — An attempt to repeal a new state law allowing undocumented immigrants to get Oregon driver's licenses has hit a snag.

Oregon Secretary of State Bev Clarno on Tuesday halted a proposed ballot initiative to walk back House Bill 2015, saying it doesn't comply with requirements stated in the Oregon Constitution.

The bill, passed earlier this year, allows Oregonians to present forms of ID that don't prove a person's legal immigration status in order to get a driver's license. The licenses will not be available until Jan. 1, 2021.

Undocumented immigrants — or others without documents proving U.S. citizenship or that they are in the country legally — have been barred from getting driver's licenses in Oregon since 2007.

Supporters of the petition want to prevent people who are here illegally from getting state driver's licenses.

The campaign to repeal the law, which calls itself "Stop Illegal Drivers," is led by Mark Callahan, a frequent candidate for political office in Oregon.

Callahan, reached for comment Tuesday, said that the campaign was "definitely

going to fight" the ruling, and pointed to several previous cases that he believes support his interpretation that the petition passes muster.

The Secretary of State's Office believes the constitution requires the petitioners to present the changes the petition would make to state statutes. Instead, the ballot title just says that a "Yes" vote on the petition "Demands repeal" of the bill.

In a post on the "Stop Illegal Drivers" website, the campaign said the reason Elections Director Steve Trout gave — the constitutional requirement cited by Clarno — was "not valid."

The campaign also posted on the website a message from Callahan addressed to Trout. Callahan called the reason for the rejection "flawed in logic and reasoning." He maintained that the petition was not trying to pass a new law.

"How can we submit the full text of a law that we are NOT 'Proposing?'" Callahan wrote. "It doesn't make any sense. If we are NOT 'Proposing' a law, there is no full text of a law to submit."

Oregon's constitution includes several ways that Oregonians can have a direct say on a policy at the ballot box.

Lawmakers can refer a measure to the ballot; citizens can ask for a referendum on a particular law; or citizens can file an initiative petition to change state laws.

A referendum, which simply asks voters to reject or keep a law state legislators pass, differs from an initiative petition.

In the case of House Bill 2015, petitioners could not submit a referendum. That's because of a few words in the bill that amount to an "emergency clause."

That clause says the bill takes effect as soon as lawmakers pass it. The state constitution doesn't allow bills that go into effect that soon to get referred.

But citizens can file an initiative petition in that case. That's what the backers of Initiative Petition 43 did.

Since they filed an initiative petition, the Secretary of State's Office says, petitioners were supposed to present an amended form of the law for voters' consideration, showing exactly how the law would be changed if the provisions

of House Bill 2015 were repealed.

But the petition they submitted just "demanded" repeal of the law.

House Bill 2015 affected many parts of state law, said Deputy Secretary of State Rich Vial.

"We feel like you need to put the sections that were originally affected by the legislation in to the petition and show what you would propose to take back out of the law or change it back to what it was before," Vial said. "The law, obviously, was complicated enough that there was a number of things in the statute that were added or changed."

Moving forward, the petitioners could rewrite the petition and re-gather the sponsorship signatures in order to get another ballot title drafted, at which point the Secretary of State's Office would review both again for constitutionality, Vial said.

But in cases like this, if petitioners don't want to rewrite the measure, sometimes they will bring a lawsuit.

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Baker Charter Schools honored

Baker Charter Schools has been named No. 1 among the top 100 nonprofit organizations to work for in Oregon.

The honor was presented by the Portland Business Journal during an awards banquet Oct. 3 at the Sentinel Hotel in Portland.

"It's based on an employee survey. It's pretty cool," Daniel Huld, Baker Charter Schools superintendent, stated in a press release.

Huld said Shawn Farrens, Portland region principal, learned about the "Best Places to Work" contest and distributed the survey to staff.

Baker Charter Schools is in the category of large nonprofits with more than 50 employees. Although based in Baker City, the online school has eight offices in Oregon and 150 employees.

Roland Hobson is the organization's Eastern Region principal with an office at the former North Baker School building. Student and financial records also are housed at the building, which is the statewide administrative office for the charter schools. All special education staff is housed at the Baker City office as well.

They use online communication to provide statewide services to the 280 students on individualized education plans, Huld said.

"The 100 Best was a great award," Huld said Thursday in a telephone interview. "It was really nice to be honored in that way, especially from the employees. That was really nice."

He noted that there are more than 21,300 nonprofits in Oregon.

In addition to a trophy, the Baker Charter Schools' honor is included in the October 2019 Oregon Business Journal's listing of 100 Best Nonprofits to Work For in Oregon, the honor is listed on the magazine's website and Facebook page.

"We were shocked and surprised and pleased," Huld said as the award was announced. "It was a great night."

Baker Charter Schools has a five-person school board. Directors are Charlene Chase, chair; Rob Gaslin, vice chair; secretary-treasurer; Heidi Dalton, Chris Barnes and Elizabeth Thorton.

The organization offers two programs for students: Baker Web Academy, which serves students in kindergarten through Grade 12; and Baker Early College.

Each has its own charter. In the Early College program, students take 12 credits at a community college while also earning high school credits. If a student starts Early College as a high school sophomore, he or she can earn an associate degree along with a high school diploma.

Although Baker Charter Schools use an online platform, teachers are assigned 25 to 30 students they meet in person every two weeks and meet with online several times per week. Teachers also grade classes in their content areas.

Baker Charter Schools has a partnership with Baker School District, which receives a portion of funds for every enrolled student. Of the 2,500 students enrolled throughout Oregon, 50 to 60 live in Baker County.

"They have been great partners for Baker School District and afford local students more options than would be normal for a school district our size," Baker School District Superintendent Mark Witty stated in the press release.

Huld expressed his appreciation for the collaboration between the Baker School District and Baker Charter Schools.

"They're very supportive of what we're doing," Huld said. "Mark has been great to work with."

ALARM

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Once Alpine Alarms identified the fob responsible for activating the alarm, it was sent off for further examination to determine what caused the malfunction, Witty said.

"It was a technical error with one of the fobs," he said. "We're hoping they can tell us what happened and why."

Once the problem was identified, the alarm system was reactivated.

"The safety of our students is our top priority,

and we will get this issue resolved," Witty stated in a press release. "We appreciate the prompt response by our local emergency teams, and will take necessary measures to deter this from happening again."

Past accidental activation of the fobs was corrected by encasing them in a heavy compact case and changing the distribution of the alarms.

More information about the false alarm is available by calling the School District office at 541-524-2260.

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