

## 2024 Board of Directors

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Ann Silver - CEO

To: Chair Backus and the Honorable Members of the Interim Finance Committee

From: Ann Silver, Chief Executive Officer 

Date: August 22, 2024

Re: Reduced tax on non-combustible, smoke-free products

Employers continue to be concerned about rising health care costs for their businesses and their employees, so The Reno + Sparks Chamber of Commerce understands the urgent need to reduce the number of workers who maintain the deadly habit of smoking combustible cigarettes that contain the most harmful tobacco product.

While convincing a die-hard cigarette smoker to quit is difficult, Americans have long embraced sugar free soda, light beer, diet cookies and vegan eating and weight loss drugs, as they consistently try to improve their health and longevity outcomes.

Therefore, we support a transition to smoke-free, FDA-approved products that substantially reduce the risk of fatal harm and immediately provide habitual smokers a better choice.

The Chamber does not specifically endorse smoking nor does it attempt to dissuade those who do. But it is common sense to make smoke-free products more affordable than cigarettes, with the intention of transitioning adult smokers to a less harmful product and a less expensive alternative. Reasonable tax policy could help promote the smoke-free alternative and incentivize smokers to switch their product.

We still dream of an entirely smoke-free Nevada, but it is a long road for those addicted to cigarettes, e-cigarettes, and vaping. With a lower priced product accompanied by a lower tax, this may result in more disposable income that can be better spent on healthier foods!