

From: KAHPERD Executive Committee <kentuckyahperd@gmail.com>

Subject: Support for Passage of HB 11 in the Senate

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Cc: Kimberly.Moser@lrc.ky.gov

Dear Members of the Senate Health and Welfare Committee,

I am the Executive Director of the Kentucky Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (KAHPERD), Kentucky's lead professional association for health and physical education teachers, higher education professionals and pre-professional students.

8 years ago when i started at the KY Department of Education, our CDC grant laid the groundwork for promoting and tracking local policy for tobacco free schools in our state. That tracking was not the pretty colorful maps and data you see today, it was simply push pins in a printout map of the 173 school districts. Over the years more and more partners came to the table to help promote and support the work at the local level. KAHPERD for the last several years has also recognized new TFS districts each year at our annual convention in partnership with the Kentucky Department for Public Health. In 2017, I sat next to Senator Alvarado in the committee testimony for this bill and was pleased to see it pass the full Senate that year. Later that summer in the middle of the growing opioid epidemic I joined Renee Shaw on KET to discuss drug prevention and the connection with tobacco policy, an excerpt of that clip and conversation can be viewed here: <https://youtu.be/EJ7h2ZooQNM>.

This legislation is personal to me on a number of fronts but also very important to KAHPERD and the future health of our state. I was born and raised on a tobacco farm in eastern Kentucky so I understand the heritage of tobacco in our state. I also firsthand have witnessed and continue to witness the devastating effects of tobacco use and addiction with my own family. It's time to chart a new path for our students, even more so with the epidemic level increase of youth use with vapor and e-cigarette products. As health teachers, we can not teach one thing to students in the classroom then allow for students to have adults model the exact opposite behaviors on school property at school activities.

Polling data shows adults overwhelming support this legislation. The Kentucky Chamber of Commerce, the KY Schools Boards Association, the KY School Superintendents Association along with countless other health advocacy groups all support this legislation. It unanimously passed it's House committee in early February and passed the full House this week by a tally of 85-11. This is clearly a great piece of legislation and desperately needed in our state and in our communities. KAHPERD asks for your support for ensuring this important legislation makes it successfully from your committee to the floor of the Senate for a full vote during the 2019 General Assembly.

Sincerely,

Jamie Sparks, Executive Director

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