



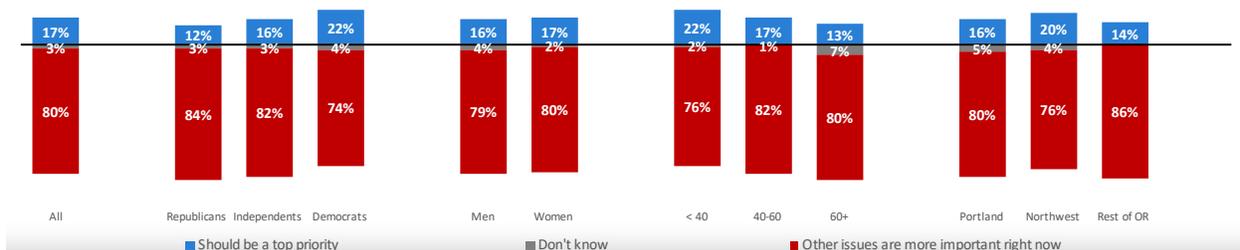
Where Strategy Meets Science

To: Altria Client Services  
From: Brenda Gianiny  
President, Axis Research  
Date: March 2, 2023  
RE: Statewide Polling in Oregon

## Voters See Other Issues As Far More Important For The State To Focus On Than A Tobacco Flavor Ban

Voters in Oregon are clear in their belief that the state government should be prioritizing other issues over a ban on the sale of flavored tobacco products to adults 21 years or older. Just 17% want the state to prioritize a ban on flavored tobacco products, compared with a massive 80% who say other issues are more important. Not only is this 63-point margin significant, it is also bi-partisan, with a clear majority of Democrats, Independents, and Republicans encouraging the state to focus on other issues.

Q07. As you may know, the state government is considering a proposal to ban all flavored tobacco products. It is already illegal to sell tobacco products to anyone under 21, so this proposal would prohibit the sale of any flavored tobacco product to adults 21 and older. Regardless of where you stand on this proposal, do you think banning these products for adults 21 and older should be a top priority for the state government, or are other issues more important right now?



In fact, less than 1% say tobacco use is an important issue for leaders to be focused on. Instead of focusing on limiting products that are currently legal to adults (21+) in Oregon, voters would rather see state lawmakers prioritize the high cost of living in the state (57%) and homelessness (41%).



When asked specifically about a ban on flavored tobacco products, a majority of demographic groups agree with messaging against the ban, as detailed below. As shown, the most popular arguments against the ban are the recognition that the state should be focused on other priorities (as detailed above), the failure of prohibition in the past, and the creation of illegal markets.

	All Voters % Agree	Democrats % Agree	Independents % Agree	Republicans % Agree
<b>There are far more important issues for the government to focus on than banning legal products for adults 21 and older.</b>	87%	87%	90%	83%
<b>As the country has seen with alcohol and cannabis prohibition in the past, banning products to influence adult behavior doesn't work, and instead creates illegal markets that fuel crime, arrests, and people getting sick from tainted products.</b>	80%	80%	82%	78%
<b>America's "War on Drugs" was a failure because it tried to reduce drug use through prohibition and criminalization rather than education, prevention, counseling, and health care. We should learn from history, not repeat our mistakes with these bans on all flavored tobacco products for adults 21 and older.</b>	79%	81%	82%	69%
<b>The government has already taken important steps to reduce youth tobacco usage by raising the minimum age to buy tobacco to 21 and by educating the public about the risks of using tobacco. Adults 21 and older should have the freedom to make their own informed choices and decide what legal products they can buy.</b>	77%	73%	80%	78%
<b>Many in law enforcement are saying bans on all flavored tobacco products for adults 21 and older go too far</b>	75%	68%	77%	80%

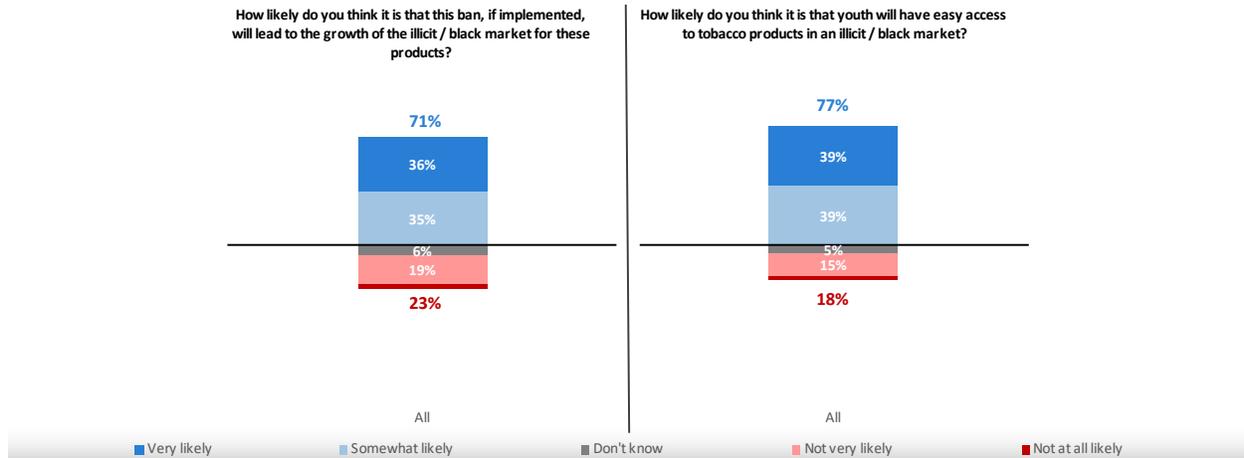


<b>because they will create a whole new illegal market and increase crime. Our police already have enough on their hands keeping our communities safe.</b>				
<b>The government allows adults who are 21 or older to buy alcohol in a variety of flavors so the same should be true for tobacco</b>	74%	70%	78%	74%

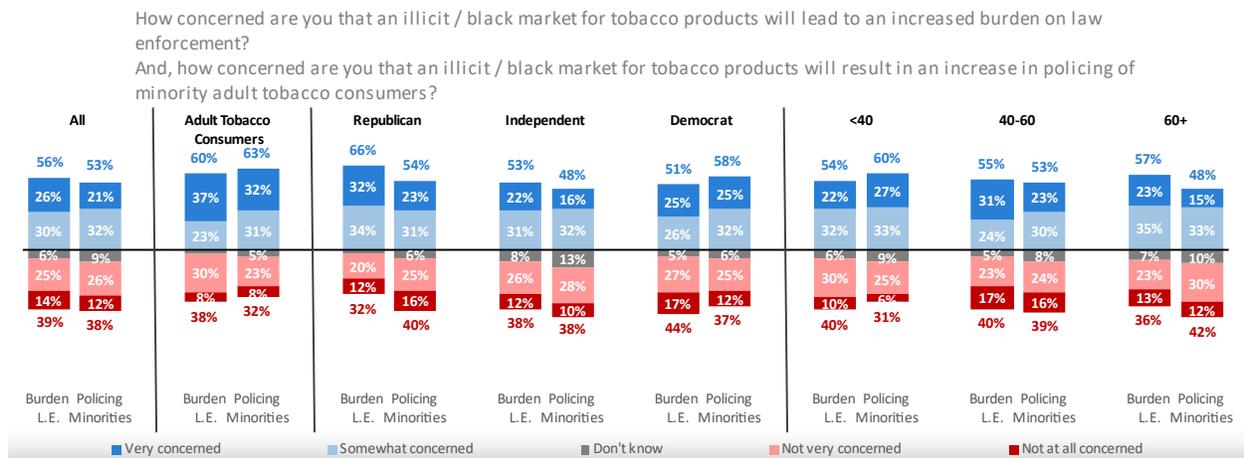
On the other side of this debate, just a minority of voters agree with proponents of the ban and the messaging they've been using to advocate for the ban (also detailed below).

	<b>All Voters % Agree</b>	<b>Democrats % Agree</b>	<b>Independents % Agree</b>	<b>Republicans % Agree</b>
<b>Flavored products are really only meant to appeal to kids, and if that means we need to outlaw flavored alcohol in addition to flavored tobacco to keep it out of the hands of kids, so be it.</b>	39%	44%	37%	36%
<b>The most important thing the government can do for public health is to get people to stop smoking and banning all flavored tobacco products for adults 21 and older is the most effective way to do that.</b>	36%	44%	30%	37%

In addition to wanting elected officials to focus on other, more important issues, voters also express concern about the negative consequences such a ban could have in creating an illicit market for flavored tobacco products. Voters are not just concerned about the overall creation of a new black/illicit market; voters also express unease with young people having *greater* access to these products through an illicit market, as illustrated on the following page. Concerns about the creation of an illicit market, and the impact on young people in Oregon, are consistent among all age groups but we see increased concern among those voters without a college degree.



Voters also see an impact on the law enforcement community and their policing as the result of a new illicit market for flavored tobacco products. As shown below, a majority of both Republicans and Democrats believe the ban of flavored tobacco products would lead to both an increased burden on law enforcement and an increase in policing of minority adult tobacco consumers.

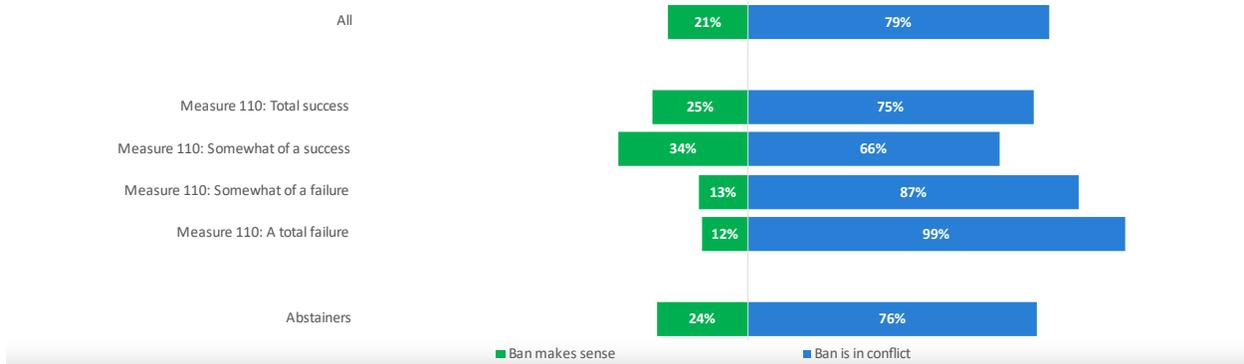


### Broad Agreement That A Tobacco Flavor Ban Contradicts Measure 110

Voters also see the proposed ban on flavored tobacco as in direct conflict with Measure 110, a ballot measure which is viewed to be largely unsuccessful. When asked about Measure 110, which passed in 2020 and decriminalized illegal drugs in Oregon, 58% of voters say the measure has been a failure. As shown on the following page, regardless of viewing Measure 110 as a success or a failure, a large majority of all voters say that “Oregon’s proposal to ban flavored tobacco products for adults 21+ is in conflict with the state’s decriminalizing drugs”.



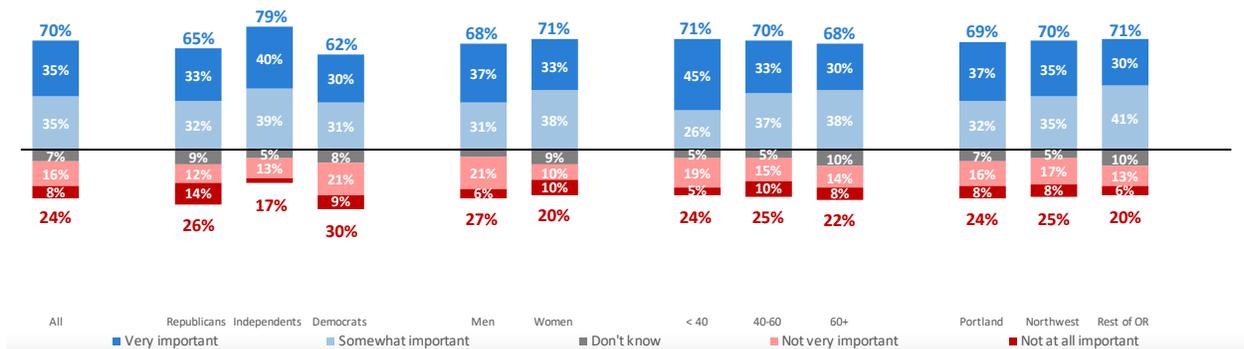
Which of the following statements comes closer to your own view?  
 Oregon's proposal to ban flavored tobacco for adults 21+ is in conflict with the state's decriminalizing drugs.  
 It makes sense to ban flavored tobacco for adults 21+ while also decriminalizing drugs.



### Conclusion

In conclusion, voters overwhelmingly (by a 46-point margin) say it's important to keep flavored tobacco products legal so they can be 1) properly regulated, and 2) sold through legal, age-restricted channels. This strong sentiment is consistent across partisan lines, age groups, and in every region across Oregon.

Q19 How important is it that these tobacco products remain legal so they can be properly regulated and sold through legal, age-restricted channels?



### Methodology

Axis Research surveyed 402 Oregon voters (ages 21 and older) from February 13-27<sup>th</sup>, 2023. Interviews were conducted online, with a blend of samples for the greatest reach and to reduce any bias inherent in a single panel file. Respondents are proportionate to the population of Oregon in terms of region, age, race, party, and gender.

The objective of the survey was to better understand voters' (21+) attitudes toward the state's proposed ban on all flavored tobacco products.

The margin of error on these results is ±4.9%.