



For Immediate Release

Oregon Health & Science University Professor and American Heart Association Board Member to Advocate in Nation's Capital

Dr. Owen McCarty, Chair, Department of Biomedical Engineering at OHSU and Nancy Long, Educational/Behavioral Consultant and AHA Oregon & SW Washington Board Member, both of Portland, will urge Congressional action on e-cigarettes, surprise medical billing and NIH funding

PORLAND, October 16, 2019 — Dr. Owen McCarty, Professor and Chair, Department of Biomedical Engineering at OHSU and Nancy Long, Educational/Behavioral Consultant and member of the American Heart Association, Oregon & SW Washington board of directors will join hundreds of cardiovascular disease researchers, patients, survivors, and others from across the country in Washington, D.C. this week to ask elected representatives to “pave the path forward” for policies that lead to longer, healthier lives. The advocates are volunteers of the American Heart Association, the world’s leading voluntary organization focused on heart and brain health, and are traveling to the nation’s capital for the Association’s biennial “You’re the Cure on the Hill.”

AHA advocates will urge Members of Congress to pass legislation to remove flavored tobacco products, including e-cigarettes, cigars and menthol cigarettes, from the market; pass legislation to protect patients from financially crippling surprise medical bills; and continue our nation’s commitment to cures by supporting a \$2.5 billion increase for the National Institutes of Health.

“Cardiovascular disease is the leading cause of death for Americans. My team’s goal is to create therapies to prevent and treat this disease,” said Dr. McCarty. “The AHA funded the first grant of my research career. Based on that initial work, over the past 15 years we have gone on to create and bring 2 drugs to clinical trials for evaluation of safety and potential for treating cardiovascular disease. We are now at the crucial point to demonstrate efficacy in order to translate these drugs and make them available for patients. It is at this point that NIH funding is so critical, as in the absence of support potential therapies go unrealized. Increasing the NIH budget will create solutions, create jobs, and save lives.”

In Oregon, this is day two of Governor Kate Brown’s ban of sales of flavored e-cigarette products, and e-cigarettes and their subsequent health effects continue to be top of mind.

“In recent years, we are witnessing a reversal of the progress made in reducing nicotine consumption amongst our youth given their skyrocketing use of e-cigarettes,” said Long.

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“The marketing of kid-friendly flavored tobacco products is a key factor in this resurgence. We are urging Congress to move quickly to ban flavored tobacco products to reverse this trend and protect this and future generations from developing an addiction.”

The You’re the Cure Biennial takes place on Capitol Hill October 16-18.

"We are so fortunate to have Owen and Nancy, two incredible strong local supporters, traveling to Washington to speak with Members of Congress to underscore the importance of these legislative proposals to our community," said Leslie McCall, Executive Director, American Heart Association Oregon & SW Washington. "Reducing youth tobacco use, improving access to affordable health care, and increasing federal research funding are pivotal for a healthier Oregon, and we are grateful that Owen and Nancy are using their passion and voices to help persuade lawmakers on Capitol Hill to support these policies."

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About the American Heart Association

The American Heart Association is a relentless force for a world of longer, healthier lives. We are dedicated to ensuring equitable health in all communities. Through collaboration with numerous organizations, and powered by millions of volunteers, we fund innovative research, advocate for the public's health and share lifesaving resources. The Dallas-based organization has been a leading source of health information for nearly a century. Connect with us on heart.org, [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/AmericanHeart), [@Twitter](https://twitter.com/AmericanHeart) or by calling 1-800-AHA-USA1.

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heart.org and strokeassociation.org