



## Department of Solid Waste

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To: Oregon Senate Committee on Energy and Environment.

Date: February 22, 2021

Re: SB 582-1

I am writing/here today to express my support for SB 582-1. I was a member of the steering committee that the Department of Environmental Quality convened to develop the proposal that is now SB 582-1. My remarks come from the perspective of the Director of Solid Waste for Deschutes County. I believe that SB 582-1 will have a significant positive impact on the recycling system in Oregon particularly for Deschutes County and small rural counties around the state. I see benefits in three main areas that are of particular concern for us.

1. Consistency.

The bill strives for consistency in recycling across the state. Currently each county has its own list of materials that they are required to include in their recycling program. Larger communities have several items on their list while smaller, more rural communities may only have one or two items on their list. This leads to confusion as visitors struggle to learn what is or isn't acceptable where they are visiting. Having a system where what is or is not recyclable, how recyclables are prepared, how we approach education to citizens on recycling, and how we approach contamination reduction efforts will all be much more clear and effective if we are consistent across the state.

2. Cost.

Achieving that consistency comes at a cost. Smaller rural counties with limited resources will find it cost prohibitive to expand the number and amounts of recycling they collect in today's market. I believe that most counties would be happy to collect as many items as the State would like, but only if they get relief from the high cost of transporting those items to processors that are all located in the Vancouver to Salem corridor. This bill would reimburse those transportation costs. The producer responsibility approach proposed in the bill will provide funding for a wide array of needed improvements to the system, but I see this transportation reimbursement as a key item to successfully modernize our recycling system.

3. Multi-family recycling

Multi-family dwellings are greatly underserved in recycling. Service providers are unable to engage with individual tenants for education or promotion since their customer is the manager of the complex rather than the tenant. Many facilities have inadequate space for recycling containers. Contamination at such facilities is higher than other dwellings. As a result, many facilities offer no recycling at all. This bill will include efforts to improve multi-family recycling. Tenants of this type of housing are more likely to be low income or people of color, because that is who is more likely to live in an apartment building.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this input.