



TO: House Committee on Rules
FROM: Brian Sjothun, City Manager
DATE: February 21, 2022
RE: Support for HB 4158

The City of Medford urges your **support of HB 4158** which will allow our community to continue with the responsible disposal of electronic waste through the state-run recycling program.

The good news here is that the volumes of electronic waste collected in 2019, 2020, and 2021 exceeded expectations. The bad news is the work to change the goal numbers, contracts, and mechanics of the state electronic device recycling program has not been done, leaving existing collection sites in an untenable position. HB 4158 is a short-term technical fix in 2022 to allow DEQ to increase caps and retain the existing collection sites.

Rogue Transfer & Recycling (RTR) in White City has been collecting electronic waste (E-Waste) for recycling from the citizens of Jackson County since 2008. In 2010, Oregon enacted the landfill disposal ban on E-Waste (computers, electronics, laptops, and TV's) and established a state authorized contractor in charge of collection sites. RTR, working with that contractor, has collected more E-Waste than all other collection sites in Jackson and Josephine counties combined. RTR provides our citizens with a convenient, safe and efficient location to access the Oregon E-Cycles program and drop off their E-Waste free of charge.

In November of 2021, RTR received notice that they would no longer be allowed to participate in the E-Cycles program. It was later determined that the state authorized contractor for the E-Cycles program needed to cut costs for the upcoming year, so a handful of collection sites were to be eliminated from participation in the program for 2022. Disturbingly, we are told that most sites receiving this same letter were in rural areas of the state.

Removing convenient collection sites in the hope of decreasing the amount of material collected to contain costs for the current year will not change the demand or need; instead, it will likely lead to customer frustration, unequal and inconsistent access to services, and undermine the credibility and momentum of Oregon's E-Cycles Program. Given that the cost of this program has already been paid for as part of the consumer's purchase of the electronics, the failure to provide adequate disposal for discarded electronics does not make sense nor is it fair to our citizens.

We recognize that a more comprehensive set of changes need to be made to the E-Cycles program. This technical fix will allow the time to pull stakeholders together to work on longer-term solutions for the 2023. **In the meantime, we must maintain stability of the program on behalf of our citizens – please help us do so by-passing HB 4158.**