

## **YES on Senate Bill 488**

Dear Oregon Legislators,

I urge you to **VOTE YES on SB 488, the Medical Waste Incineration Act.**

I live in Salem, not too far from the Covanta Marion Incinerator, and am concerned about toxic emissions harming people I consider my regional neighbors. **As long as Covanta burns the medical waste other states don't want, Oregon will remain one of the nation's primary dumping grounds for toxic medical waste pollution.**

Emissions from the Covanta incinerator contain lead, ammonia, arsenic, beryllium, cadmium, chromium (VI), hydrochloric acid, mercury, nitrogen oxides, particulate matter (PM 10), fine particulate matter (PM 2.5) and sulfur dioxide emissions. Incineration of solid waste also creates new compounds like dioxins and furans, the most toxic class of chemicals known.

Heavy metal ingestion by children causes learning disabilities, lowered IQ, hyperactivity and attention deficit. Let me tell you about some of the other ways these chemicals harm people in our community:

- **DIOXINS** belong to the so-called "dirty dozen," a group of dangerous chemicals known as persistent organic pollutants (POPs). They remain in the human body, with a half-life of up to 11 years. Dioxins can cause reproductive and developmental problems, damage the immune system, interfere with hormones and cause cancer. Dioxins are not only dangerous to humans; they endanger our family farms. Brooks, where the incinerator is located, is right in the middle of the Willamette Valley, the state's agricultural breadbasket. Many countries monitor their food supply for dioxins, and have recalled food with high levels of dioxin, with good reason.
- **MERCURY** is another in the "dirty dozen." Exposure to mercury, even small amounts, is a threat to the development of the child in utero and early in life. This highly toxic chemical can wreak havoc with the nervous, digestive and immune systems, and harms lungs, kidneys, skin and eyes.
- **CADMIUM** emissions damage people's lungs and can lead to death. Exposure can also cause kidney disease, fragile bones and cancer.

Covanta Marion is almost four decades old and burns toxic waste according to outdated regulations. The emissions and medical waste tonnage of the aging facility far exceed EPA guidelines for new large medical waste incinerators. For example, Covanta emits seven times more lead and ten times more cadmium.

Under a regulatory loophole, Covanta Marion can burn up to 18,000 thousand tons of imported medical waste using weaker municipal trash incinerator regulations. This makes Oregon a dumping ground for the toxic pollution other states don't want. **Senate Bill 488 will require the DEQ to adopt air pollution standards that protect Oregonians.**

PLEASE VOTE YES ON SB 488!

Sincerely,

Nadene LeCheminant  
Salem, Oregon