

Submitter: Matthew Fick

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Energy and Environment

Measure: SB488

To: Senate Energy and Environment Committee

From: Matthew Fick

Re: Closing the Medical Waste Loophole SB 488

Chair Sollman; Vice Chair Findley; and members Sen. Golden, Sen. Hayden, and Sen. Lieber,

My name is Matthew Fick, and I live in Salem, Oregon .

I am writing to you today in support of SB 488, The Medical Waste Incinerator Act to close the loophole that allows the Covanta Incinerator in Brooks, Oregon to burn excess amounts of medical waste under municipal waste instead of medical waste regulations.

As a resident of Salem, the health and safety of the community is of utmost importance to me. This is an issue that negatively affects the well-being of myself and my peers. The emissions caused by the excessive amounts of waste from the Covanta Incinerator lower the quality of life for all inhabitants in the area. It is unfair for the people who reside here to have to live a less healthy life due to a regulation loophole.

Waste incinerators are worse than coal as they produce more harmful and toxic metals than coal plants do. The pollution created from the Covanta Incinerator not only infiltrates the air but also into soil, rivers, built water sources, and directly impacts wildlife due to the abundance of ash. Not only do regular waste incinerators negatively affect the environment and the health of those they surround, but the Covanta Incinerator, specifically, takes waste from outside the state and unregulated medical waste, that produces far more heavy toxic metals than everyday trash.

I urge you to pass SB 488 in the 2023 legislative session to ensure that the loop hole is closed and that Oregon does not become a dumping ground for other states' waste.

Sincerely,  
Matthew Fick