

March 22, 2023

Chair Sollman, Vice-Chair Findley, and members of the Senate Committee on Energy and Environment

In support of SB 525-1

Electrify Now is a volunteer organization dedicated to educating homeowners and the public on the advantages of all-electric solutions for health, safety, lower operating costs and as a potent way to reduce the climate impacts of our buildings, appliances and products.

Electrifying outdoor power equipment is a sensible and practical way to reduce air pollution, reduce unnecessary noise pollution and reduce climate warming carbon pollution. The equipment to do this is widely available and cost effective today. Many landscaping companies are doing this voluntarily, but many will need pushing to do it faster.

Gas powered leaf blowers are the worst offender and the most noticeable of the gas power tools due to their extreme noise and the overuse of this equipment. These tools are a particular problem in dense urban areas where the noise from one machine can disrupt entire neighborhoods and emit toxic pollution near schools, offices and public places.

The low wage workers using this equipment for hours a day are subjected to very high concentrations of pollutants that are known carcinogens, contribute to respiratory disease, dementia and other health harms including hearing loss from exposure to high noise levels for prolonged periods. These workers typically have no say in the equipment they are forced to use.

In Portland, the noise ordinance prohibits the use of the most powerful and noisy machines, so electric options deliver the same power and productivity as the compliant gas machines. This ordinance would have an extremely positive impact on quality of life in our city neighborhoods without impacting productivity of the workers who just want to get their tasks completed.

We support this legislation to eliminate the use of gas leaf blowers in large urban areas to protect workers and the public from toxic air pollution and unhealthy levels of noise. Please pass this sensible legislation.

Respectfully,

Brian Stewart
Founder,
Electrify Now

