



March 30th, 2023

Senator Dembrow, Co-Chair
Representative Pham, Co-Chair
Joint Subcommittee on Natural Resources
Oregon Legislature

Re: Environment Oregon supports HB 5018

Co-Chairs Dembrow and Pham, and Members of the Committee,

Environment Oregon is a statewide, member-based environmental advocacy organization working for clean air, clean water, open space and a liveable climate, representing tens of thousands of members across Oregon. We are writing in support of House Bill 5018 and ensuring that the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) has the funding needed to implement critical programs underway to address climate change, air pollution, transportation electrification, modernizing Oregon's recycling system and more.

In 2021, the Oregon legislature passed the Recycling Modernization Act, making Oregon the second state in the country to enact a producer responsibility program for packaging and paper products. This landmark law will help ensure a waste management system that works better for Oregonians and our environment.

In 2022, I was appointed to serve on the Recycling Council, an advisory body that helps to oversee the implementation of the Recycling Modernization Act, and was later elected Vice Chair. Through my experience serving on the Recycling Council, I have had a front row seat to the work needed to implement such an ambitious new program. The current staff working on it are moving mountains, but it's clear (and was anticipated) that more staff capacity will be needed as the law gets implemented over the next few years.

POP 132 would provide four positions to support the Recycling Modernization Act. These positions were anticipated in 2021 and will be critical to the successful implementation of the RMA. POP 133 would provide six positions to do the existing work in the program. Both are necessary to ensure the success of the Recycling Modernization Act.

Environment Oregon also supports POP 115, POP 140, POP 142, and POP 112. These POPs all fund critical programs to continue the state's work to reduce climate emissions. Strong implementation of Oregon's Climate Protection Program, Clean Fuels Program, Clean Truck Rules, and other DEQ programs will help ensure that we are doing all that we can to tackle climate change in our state.

Finally, we support POP 110, an increase in the Title V fees. The Title V program helps to ensure the largest emitters of air pollution comply with all state and federal requirements and keep nearby communities safe. This fee increase is needed to maintain current staffing levels for the program, which is mission critical to keep this program fully functional.

We urge your support for HB 5018 so the Oregon DEQ can continue their work to ensure a cleaner, greener future for Oregon.

Sincerely,

Celeste Meiffren-Swango
State Director