

Submitter: Charlotte MacDonald

On Behalf Of: self

Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee On Natural Resources

Measure: HB5018

The Oregon DEQ is under-funded causing significant slowdowns and resulting in more than one major program failing to meet its target goals. One of these programs is the Cleaner Air Oregon program created by the 2018 Cleaner Air Oregon Act passed by the Oregon legislature. None of the major timelines for this program have been met due to very low pace of work. In 2019, the agency estimated that the first prioritization of facilities to be examined in the CAO program would be completed in 2 years time. The first, highest health risk facilities are only 50% addressed 3 years after that deadline has passed by.

I am a neighbor of one of those facilities, Columbia Steel Castings Corporation. Due to the extremely slow pace at DEQ, and the inability for staff to manage the process, this facility stopped partway through the reporting process. Partway through the process, in July 2021, at a public DEQ meeting, it was revealed that initial source testing showed a 730% increase in reported Manganese emissions over previously reported levels. The public is now left without the Health Risk Assessment on the full list of air toxics emitted at Columbia Steel Castings Corporation.

They closed rather than disclose their reporting publicly. Due to this failure, we, the public, are left holding the bag - having to find resources to finish the Health Risk Assessment. We are resorting to public records requests and scrambling to find a data scientist who can do the analysis. The program has failed us. I believe that DEQ needs additional budget to run this critical program.

Sincerely,

Charlotte MacDonald

Neighbor 1000 ft away from Columbia Steel Castings Corporation  
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