

May 3, 2023

TO: Joint Committee on Ways & Means

RE: Support for **SB 488A** Air Quality Monitoring Modernization, the Building Resilience Package (**SB 868-871**), Community Resilience Hubs (**HB 2990**), & **OHA #417** EJ Mapping

Co-chairs Steiner and Sanchez and members of the Committee,

For the record my name is Professor Janet Lorenzen. I live in Salem and teach at Willamette University. I want to convey my support for 3 bills and OHA #417 Environmental Justice Mapping.

First, **SB 488A** would **improve and modernize the air quality monitoring** at the Covanta Marion Incinerator. For years I have been trying to get quality data about heavy metals emitted from the incinerator just 10 miles away from the capitol. Existing programs haven't helped. Senator Deb Patterson, Beyond Toxics, 350Salem, and the Clean Air Now! Coalition have worked tirelessly to develop this bill. We only need \$112,000 for the DEQ to find out if we have another Bullseye Glass situation.

When it was built, the incinerator was sold to Marion County as a local, municipal waste incinerator, but the new owners have done a bait and switch. This is an old story of out-of-state investors maximizing profits while externalizing air pollution, toxic ash, and long-term health effects to an environmental sacrifice zone. Many of the people who live nearest to the incinerator are low-income, Latinx, with low English proficiency, and little access to political representation. The incinerator currently burns over 6 times the amount of medical waste that the EPA allows for a large medical waste incinerator. This is a textbook example of environmental racism.

**Covanta Marion is a bad actor.** For years Covanta has delayed giving data to DEQ. They have stalled, asked for extensions, had to re-do tests because they lacked accuracy, turned in confusing data, and once even turned in data from a newer incinerator in Canada on the date when their own data was due. **Please make them continuously test, what they're making us continuously breathe!**

I also strongly support the **Building Resilience package (SB 868-871)**. Now is the time to decarbonize buildings, ensure access to cooling during dangerous heatwaves, and lower the energy burden for low-income Oregonians. These bills create a foundation for bringing in millions & millions of Federal dollars. To shore up resilience in the face of heat and fire disasters we also need to fund **Community Resilience Hubs (HB 2990)**. These bills can't wait. Climate can't wait!

Finally, a critically important tool to addressing racial injustice in Oregon is **OHA #417 Environmental Justice Mapping**. Both Washington State and California already have these maps. We need a map because the EPA map is not detailed enough. The EPA specially says that its maps are not intended to replace state maps. **If we want to target policies toward the most polluted parts of Oregon with the most vulnerable populations, we need these maps.**

Thank you,  
Prof. Janet Lorenzen