



February 12, 2024

ORRA Urges Your Support for SB 1596- Right to Repair

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

The Oregon Refuse and Refuse and Recycling Association, ORRA, is the statewide trade association representing solid waste management companies across Oregon. ORRA members collect, transport, and process most of Oregon's residential and commercial refuse and recyclables, as well as operate material recovery facilities and many of Oregon's municipal solid waste transfer stations, landfills, and compost facilities—from small family-owned companies to the largest waste management companies in the world.

Many of ORRA's members operate Oregon E-Cycles Program collection sites across the state in their role to support Oregon's solid waste infrastructure. Although Oregon's E-Cycles Program makes it convenient for Oregonians to recycle electronics, challenges remain with managing electronic waste. In Oregon, an estimated 4,800 cell phones alone are disposed of daily on average. This is in part because repair and reuse are so difficult.

SB 1596 would provide Oregonians with the right to repair—extending the life of these electronic devices and reducing the number that could make their way into the waste stream. Passage of SB 1596 would allow these devices to be fixed, instead of thrown away, and keep them out of the waste stream. Not only is it extremely wasteful that these devices are thrown away instead of being repaired or reused, many contain lithium-ion batteries that present a significant danger when they enter the waste stream.

In addition to this written testimony, I have submitted a summary of a November 2023 report from the National Waste & Recycling Association (NWRA) and Resource Recycling Systems (RRS) estimating that more than 5,000 fires occur annually at recycling facilities; lithium batteries are believed to be the main cause of these fires. The rate of catastrophic losses has risen by 41% over the last five years. Although the report focuses on material recovery facilities, lithium-ion batteries frequently cause fires in refuse and recycling trucks, transfer stations, and landfills.

Passage of SB 1596 is a critical step closer to keeping electronic devices out of the waste stream. ORRA urges your support for SB 1596.

Contact: Andrea Fogue, ORRA Governmental Affairs Director, andrea@orra.net.