

February 17, 2025

Oregon State Legislature  
900 Court Street NE  
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Oregon State Legislators,

I am a resident of the Kenton neighborhood in North Portland. ***I write to you in strong support of House Bill 2738 being introduced by Representative Travis Nelson.*** This bill would protect the health and wellbeing of those in North Portland (and Southern Washington) who are currently being exposed to a well-known toxin, lead, that is emitted from the Portland International Raceway (PIR).

My community, including myself, have been working for over a decade to try to get Portland Parks (who operate PIR) and the raceway to voluntarily stop using leaded fuel. PIR is unique in that it sits directly within an urban neighborhood, meaning that there are large numbers of residents who are directly impacted by the activities at the racetrack whether they want to be or not. This includes exposure to one of the most well-documented toxins, lead.

Other professional race organizations, from NASCAR to Indy, banned the use of leaded gasoline in their races years ago. This ban allowed for a unique opportunity to study how much lead was released during a race. The results are startling, as highlighted in a Guardian article published a few years ago.<sup>1</sup> One study found that one single race day event releases MORE lead into the surrounding environment than the average municipal airport.<sup>2</sup> There is no debate in the medical or scientific community as to the harmful effects of environmental lead exposure for people, particularly children and the elderly, and the environment.

With Portland Parks and PIR themselves unwilling to stop poisoning the children of North Portland, Representative Nelson introduced HB 2738 as a last resort. The vehicles which use lead in these races are a tiny portion of those utilizing the raceway (classic cars and some motorcycles) but their output of lead pollution is very high. For such a disproportionately tiny group of race enthusiasts (many of whom do not live in the city of Portland, and some do not even reside in Oregon) to be willing to put public health at risk for their entertainment purposes is immoral. For the State of Oregon to continue to allow them to do so would be a total disgrace.

***I ask, with the utmost urgency, that the Oregon State Legislature do the right thing and pass HB 2738 to protect the public and environmental health of those Oregonians who are at risk.***

Thank you for your time and attention. Sincerely,

Chris Guthrie, Kenton neighbor

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<sup>1</sup> Pattee, Emma and Stuart Henigson "Revealed: A Toxic Metal is in a US City's Air - and May be Harming Children's Brains" *The Guardian*. July 2023.  
<https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2023/jun/21/lead-emissions-racetracks-portland-international-raceway>  
(accessed February 14, 2025)

<sup>2</sup> Hollingsworth, Alex; Mike Huang; Ivan J. Rudik; and Nicholas J. Sanders "Lead Exposure Reduces Academic Performance: Intensity, Duration, and Nutrition Matter" NBER Working Paper No. 28250 December 2020, Revised June 2021 JEL No. I14,I21,Q51,Q53