

Submitter: Evan Hill
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Climate, Energy, and Environment
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2738

Testimony of Evan Hill

I strongly oppose this bill, and I have significant concerns about the way it's been presented. This proposal to ban leaded fuel in cities with populations over 500,000 doesn't fully consider the wider impact it will have on the motorsports community and the businesses surrounding Portland International Raceway (PIR).

This bill targets PIR specifically, and if passed, it could ultimately force the raceway to close. If PIR shuts down, it's not just the racers who will be affected—it's the thousands of fans, workers, and businesses in the area. From Car racing, motocross, kart racing, Drag racing, and more, PIR has become a hub for motorsports in Portland. This isn't just about a few people; it's about a whole community that depends on the events at PIR for their livelihood and passion.

The local businesses around PIR—restaurants, hotels, and shops—are already struggling, and they heavily rely on the events held at PIR. The loss of this revenue would be devastating for these small businesses, many of which are already facing difficult times. It's a real economic concern for those who work hard to make a living in the surrounding areas. This bill doesn't just threaten the raceway, it threatens the livelihoods of people who have built businesses in this community.

Beyond the financial impact, this bill seems to overlook the fact that PIR and the surrounding areas have already made significant progress in reducing contaminants. The studies often cited in support of this bill are based on a 2017 report, but since then, PIR has switched to using alcohol and methanol-based fuels in many events. Subsequent testing has shown that the contaminants from these fuels are well below OSHA standards. This updated information makes it clear that PIR has taken the necessary steps to improve air quality and reduce the risks associated with leaded fuel. The data simply doesn't support the argument that PIR is a major environmental hazard.

This bill also doesn't seem to consider the future of PIR. If it were to close, we could face a situation where a prime piece of land, over 300 acres, could be abandoned or repurposed for homeless camps—something that has already been happening in other parts of North Portland. That would be a huge loss for the community. PIR is an important asset to Portland, and it deserves to be embraced, not shut down.

Instead of pushing for legislation that could harm the motorsports community, the surrounding businesses, and the economy of the area, I urge you to work together with the motorsports community to find solutions that balance public health with the preservation of PIR. Closing PIR would hurt far more people than it helps, and the long-term effects would be devastating for Portland.

Thank you for your time and consideration.