



February 18, 2025

Representative Lively, Chair  
House Committee on Climate, Energy & Environment  
Oregon Legislature

**Re: Environment Oregon supports House Bill 3018**

Chair Lively, Vice Chairs Gamba and Levy, and Members of the Committee,

Environment Oregon is a policy and action group with one mission: to restore and protect the natural world. Our staff works for clean air, clean water, clean energy, wildlife, open spaces and a livable climate. Our members across the state put grassroots support behind our research and advocacy.

We support House Bill 3018 as a critical opportunity to reduce food waste in Oregon.

We waste too much food. It's estimated that in 2023, one million tons of food went uneaten in Oregon. To conserve natural resources and address climate change, Oregon needs to do more to reduce food waste and find opportunities to put the food waste that is generated back into the food system, rather than sending it to the landfill.

House Bill 3018 addresses food waste in two ways: uniform date labeling and commercial organics diversion.

**Uniform date labeling**

Consumers often throw away edible, nutritious food because the food date labels don't always reflect whether the food is safe to eat, but are often interpreted as "expiration dates." Applying clear, consistent standards for date labeling is a simple step that can make a big difference in preventing food waste. Some estimates show that standardizing food date labels can reduce food waste by up to 10%.

House Bill 3018 would create uniform date labels to reduce confusion about whether the food is safe to eat.

**Commercial organics diversion**

Another key strategy to reduce the environmental impacts of food waste is to divert it from the landfill. At a time of growing concern about the effects of climate change, food waste disposed of in landfills produces climate-warming methane— a greenhouse gas that is more than 80 times as potent as carbon dioxide over a 20-year period. Food waste going to a landfill is also a waste of resources— the land, energy, water and care that went into producing that food in the first place.

If we compost that waste instead of sending it to a landfill, the aerobic decomposition process prevents the production of methane emissions. Not only that, but the end product of composting is a nutrient rich soil that can be applied as fertilizer, helping farmers, gardeners and landscapers alike.

House Bill 3018 would require large commercial generators of food waste to separate "back of house" food waste from the garbage and get it collected for composting.

Oregon needs to do more to reduce food waste and keep food waste out of landfills, and House Bill 3018 is an important step forward in that effort. We encourage your support.

Sincerely,

Celeste Meiffren-Swango  
State Director