



Feb. 18, 2025

TO: Members of the House Committee on Climate, Energy, and Environment

FR: Derek Sangston, Oregon Business & Industry

RE: Opposition to HB 3018

Chair Lively, Vice-Chair Gamba, Vice-Chair Levy, members of the House Committee on Climate, Energy, and Environment. For the record, I am Derek Sangston, policy director and counsel for Oregon Business & Industry (OBI).

OBI is a statewide association representing businesses from a wide variety of industries and from each of Oregon's 36 counties. In addition to being the statewide chamber of commerce, OBI is the state affiliate for the National Association of Manufacturers and the National Retail Federation. Our 1,600 member companies, more than 80% of which are small businesses, employ more than 250,000 Oregonians. Oregon's private sector businesses help drive a healthy, prosperous economy for the benefit of everyone.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in opposition to HB 3018. While we share the goal of minimizing food waste, OBI opposes HB 3018 because it would impose overly broad regulations on Oregon's restaurants, food processors, schools, hospitals, and any other businesses with over 1,000 pounds of food waste. The bill additionally fails to reflect the realities of Oregon's waste management infrastructure and practices. It also does not acknowledge that there are many alternatives, other than composting, businesses already choose to avoid food waste.

As drafted, HB 3018 would define "food waste" in a way that does not reflect the complexity of how many businesses process food. For instance, inedible parts of food – including shells, bones, and husks – are already managed through alternative methods like energy recovery and anaerobic digestion. The bill would also require recalled or otherwise unsafe food be composted rather than destroyed. Unless HB 3018 is amended to include a narrower definition of "food waste," the bill would discourage businesses from using that waste in more efficient ways than composting it and potentially lead to health risks.

To comply with provisions of HB 3018, most businesses, schools, and hospitals would need to make significant investments in outfitting kitchens, waste collection systems, and staff training. This added burden would ultimately be borne by consumers when they pay more for food at restaurants, community hospitals already facing increased costs, and taxpayers who will either receive fewer services, higher class sizes, or increased taxes to pay for the increased costs needed to comply with this bill. This would be especially devastating to rural entities who would struggle to establish contractual agreements with waste facilities that are both geographically accessible and have sufficient capacity to accept their waste, especially since many of them are not located within 100 miles of a composting facility.

Finally, Oregon's businesses – especially its restaurants and food processors – have long engaged in food waste reduction using an all-hands approach consisting of anaerobic digestion, energy production, diversion to animal feed, and composting when appropriate. Prior to picking one of those options and holding it above all others, OBI would push for an assessment of those practices so that the Legislature can act with information on the best and most efficient practice. Doing so would help ensure any new regulations compliment rather than disrupt ongoing efforts.

Thank you for your consideration.

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