



February 19, 2025

Oregon State Legislature  
House Committee on Climate, Energy, and Environment  
900 Court St. NE  
Salem, OR 97301

**RE: Support for H.B. 3018** Relating to preventing and disposing of food waste.

Dear Chair Lively, Vice Chairs Gamba and Levy, and other members of the Committee,

On behalf of the more than 55,000 members and supporters of the Sierra Club Oregon Chapter, we write in support of House Bill 3018.

It is the right time for Oregon to join California and Washington State, along with 8 other states, in passing a strong bill to address food waste. In 2019, Oregon's Metro regional government, with its 24 cities and 3 counties, passed a similar food waste policy. Prior to 2019, Metro had a voluntary program for 11 years but then realized they had hit a ceiling. They knew that a voluntary program would be insufficient to get them to their greenhouse gas reduction goals and that they needed a policy-driven solution.

Oregon cities today are facing the same ceiling that Metro's 24 cities and 3 counties faced in the past. Salem, Corvallis, Bend and Eugene all have voluntary food waste programs that have been in place for many years, yet they still send most food waste to the landfill. In 2022, DEQ submitted a report<sup>1</sup> which found that the majority of recovered food waste in Oregon comes from the Metro area—78 percent in 2016, and 81 percent in 2020. Next highest for recovery was Lane County, with 5.7 percent recovery of food waste in 2016, and 3.7 percent in 2020. This is not enough to help Lane County meet its greenhouse reduction goals. Passage of H.B. 3018 will solve this problem. Cities in Oregon will no longer send food scraps to a landfill where it generates methane, a greenhouse gas that is 80% more potent than CO<sub>2</sub> within a 20-year time span.<sup>2</sup> By passing HB 3018, Oregon can make a significant step towards meeting our climate goals and contributing to a liveable planet.

Wasted food also contributes to wasted water and energy resources, along with filling landfills. Cities that enact policies to address the problem of food waste gain a collateral benefit: diversion of food to the food

---

<sup>1</sup>Senate Bill 263, directed cities to have a nonresidential food waste collection program. The bill required that, if goals are not being met, the Department of Environmental Quality must conduct statewide surveys of recovery rates for food and plastic waste and report back in 2022. The following link is that report: <https://www.oregon.gov/deq/mm/Documents/DEQMMLegReportFoodPlasticWasteGoals2022.pdf>

<sup>2</sup>According to the World Wildlife Federation, the production of wasted food in the United States is equivalent to the greenhouse emissions of 37 million cars. Landfills Belch Climate-Warming Methane. Even the EPA Doesn't Know How Much <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ASHFIS1d7Ok0mccdbYoDunSGJWibEZRU/edit>



insecure:<sup>3</sup> If reducing food insecurity, landfilling and GHG emissions aren't enough to inspire action to pass HB 3018, one more good reason might be: reducing food waste saves money. Businesses can save by cutting back on uneaten food. Scott Youngblood, general manager of the Embassy Suites by Hilton, noted that since implementing food scrap separation in response to Portland Oregon's Food Waste ordinance, waste removal costs were reduced by one third.

In cities across Oregon, many large organizations are already acting on food waste, but they need guidance and support. In Corvallis, for example, all primary schools separate food from garbage. Corvallis middle and high schools are working on a plan, as are schools in Bend, Salem and Eugene. HB 3018 will help support and guide this vital climate action for our children's future.

Respectfully submitted,

Emily Bowes, Policy Strategist

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Emily Bowes". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

---

<sup>3</sup>Requiring the collection of food waste, supports food waste prevention and edible food donation. Vermont saw a 60 percent increase in food donations between 2015 and 2016 after implementation of its food scraps disposal prohibition, and Massachusetts saw a 25,000 ton increase in food donations in the year after implementing its policy.