

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

Testimony Opposing Oregon House Bill 2738

Submitted to the Oregon House Committee on Environment and Natural Resources
February 19th, 2025

My name is Emma Harmon and I am submitting this testimony in strong opposition to House Bill 2738, which seeks to ban the use of leaded fuel at race tracks in cities with populations of 500,000 or more. While I understand and support efforts to protect public health and the environment, this bill is unnecessary, lacks scientific justification, and would significantly harm Oregon's motorsports community and local economy.

My family has been racing at Portland International Raceway (PIR) for years. It is more than just a racetrack—it is a place where generations of families bond over a shared passion for motorsports. Racing at PIR has brought my family closer together, creating lifelong memories and friendships within a strong, supportive community. For many, PIR is not just about competition; it is about family traditions, mentorship, and the values of hard work, dedication, and sportsmanship. HB2738 threatens to take away this opportunity from families like mine who have invested time, energy, and resources into a sport we love.

Leaded fuel is used only by a small percentage of vehicles at PIR, primarily in high-performance and vintage racing applications. These vehicles are specifically designed to operate on leaded fuel due to technical requirements that cannot be easily or affordably modified. By banning leaded fuel outright, this bill effectively sidelines these vehicles and their owners, forcing them to either withdraw from competition or invest in costly and potentially unproven engine modifications.

Motorsports play a significant role in Oregon's economy, supporting jobs, small businesses, and tourism. Events at PIR attract thousands of spectators and participants who contribute to local hotels, restaurants, auto shops, and other businesses. By restricting the use of leaded fuel, HB2738 risks driving away racing series, competitors, and fans, leading to lost revenue and reduced economic activity in the Portland area.

While the dangers of lead exposure are well-documented, HB2738 lacks any specific scientific studies demonstrating that leaded fuel use at PIR or similar facilities poses

a measurable public health risk. The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) has not presented data showing elevated lead levels in the air, soil, or surrounding neighborhoods due to track activity. Without such evidence, this bill appears to be a solution in search of a problem, unfairly targeting a niche but important sector of Oregon's motorsports culture.

For my family and many others, Portland International Raceway is more than just a racetrack—it is a second home where we share experiences, teach younger generations, and build lifelong relationships. HB2738 would take away these opportunities, harm Oregon's motorsports community, negatively impact local businesses, and limit racing opportunities without clear scientific justification. I urge this committee to reject HB2738 in favor of a more thoughtful and data-driven approach to environmental concerns in racing.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Emma Harmon