

Submitter: Shannon OLeary

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Climate, Energy, and Environment

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2738

To the elected officials supporting this bill, I urge you to reconsider moving forward and take into account the wider negative impacts it will have on the Portland-Metro area. Many who support this bill seem to have a common goal: the safety of their community. While air quality and health are undeniably important, it's worth noting that the city has failed its residents in ways that have a far greater impact on their health and safety.

As someone who has grown up and participated in racing for almost 30 years, lead exposure through racing has never been a concern by my parents in regards to my development. What was a concern to my family was that I received a good education. The Portland School District is considered to be one of the worst in the country along with the state of Oregon and the only ones to blame is those in charge at the city and state level. If the community were to put the same attention and emphasis on student success as they do with this, Oregon would certainly see a major improvement in their students.

Another area that officials fail to recognize is the declining infrastructure. A recent study in 2024 by students at Oregon State University, found that lead levels in moss samples were 2-times great in urban neighborhoods where lead sheathed telecom cables were still being used compared to urban areas where the cables had been replaced. It was also noted that these lead levels were 38-times greater than in rural parts of the Portland-Metro area. This is just one example where the city and state government has failed these communities by neglecting the infrastructure.

In regards to public safety, the city and state should be applauding race tracks for providing a safe and controlled environment for all likes of racing and automotive sports. Portland International Raceway has been a staple to the community for over 60 years and is well celebrated among the racing community across this great nation. Every week, the track sees thousands of people from across the northwest. For larger events, the track receives attention from racers across the country. Aside from racing, the track attracts many car clubs with members of all ages with the sole intention of bringing people together to share their passions. I for one could not imagine growing up without racing. It is a passion for so many with so few opportunities to join together. Without PIR, the Portland area would surely see an increase in illegal street racing. Street racing is incredibly dangerous due to the minimal oversight and lack of safety protocol, and PIR helps provide that to those who participate.

In conclusion, if Portland's primary concern is truly the safety of its residents, the city and state must take a step back and properly assess where the real issues lie. It's time to stop scapegoating others and deflecting attention from the failures in management. I do hope city officials see all the benefits that PIR provides to the community.