

Submitter: Dharmika Judith Henshel

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Emergency Management, General Government, and Veterans

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3062

Please pass HB3062. I have lived in the Trainsong neighborhood for about 30 years, and dealt with a number of environmental challenges. Starting in early 2020, I lost sleep for 3-5 nights a week for 3 years when the Zip-O-Laminator Plant was building huge beams for the Portland airport. I was forced awake before 4 AM for many hours to a persistent, vibrating, low-frequency sound that took over my brain, vibrated my bed and walls, and made sleep impossible. The state had a noise ordinance prohibiting that sort of noise, but the DEQ Noise Control Program was defunded in 1991, and our city had left that low-frequency noise requirement out of our city noise codes.

So, hundreds of people were consistently woken up by this sound and prevented from sleeping for the rest of the night for 3 years, as far as 3 miles north of the factory. It took that long for us, the citizens with no resources, to prove what was going on, that the company was violating the state low-frequency noise standards. The city finally adjusted the city noise code to get that offending machinery shut down. Now we have lovely laminated beams at a new Portland Airport building. But the state needs to value the health and safety of our neighborhoods as much as it values a new building at the airport. Please pass HB 3062.

Since you've read this far, I would like to mention the compounding effects of living in a small neighborhood adjacent to commercial, industrial, and railroad lands. In the 90's, we found we had a plume of polluted water under our houses, from the mismanagement of Union Pacific Railroad trainyard. I had to research whether it was safe for me and my child to eat fruit from our trees, and whether my plum would have toxic chemicals in them from the plume. We ate them, but I was never sure that it was completely safe.

Also, for decades, we had to go inside and close our windows, even on sweltering summer evenings. We chose to sweat, rather than breathing that creosote smell that the J.H. Baxter plant was illegally off-gassing night after night, year after year. Great choices.

And recently, we had to fight (and are still fighting) the city approval of USD Clean Fuels, who want to move 250,000 gallons of flammable biofuels each day, 24/7, into 40 semi tanker trucks, turning our street, one block from my house, into a flammable, noisy, chemical distribution hub. As it is, the railroad management just switched from Class I management to Class III, and we have to worry about how the railyard will be

managing train cars full of chemicals now. Plus, a storage tank facility wants to put a bunch of tanks in our neighborhood.

These kinds of cumulative effects need to be managed by the state, as well as our city, and I plead with you to pass HB 3062 so that the health and safety of neighborhoods like ours are no longer just an afterthought, if we manage to fight hard enough to keep ourselves safe. Health and safety ought to be the priority for our neighborhoods. Thank you for your time and care. - Dharmika Judith Henshel