

Supporting 2025 Senate Bill 726
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Benton County Resident

Dear Chair Sollman, Vice–Chair Brock Smith, and Members of the Senate Committee on Energy and Environment

I am in support of: 2025 Senate Bill 726

Landfills are the third-largest source of human-caused methane pollution. Oregon's landfills contribute significantly to methane pollution and current monitoring practices leave large portions of landfill surfaces unmonitored.

Without improved tracking methods, methane emissions can continue unchecked and unregulated.

I live 4.1 miles south of Coffin Butte Landfill.

On a good day, I don't smell any landfill stench.

On a bad day, I smell the landfill stench as soon as I open my door in the morning.

On a very bad day, I smell the landfill stench IN MY HOUSE! Specifically on the second floor of my home. This has happened twice in 2025...so far. It's a very disconcerting sensation to meet that acrid stench *inside* my home. This is new. Prior to 2025, I had not had this experience.

Although methane itself is odorless, when methane is released into the atmosphere, methane is accompanied by other toxic pollutants including benzene, formaldehyde, and ethylbenzene. These chemicals have serious health impacts, primarily on the lungs and immune system.

In addition, methane is highly flammable. Methane mixed with air can be an explosive combination. A disconcerting thought given that we live in a region of fields and forests.

When I report the bad and very bad days to the State of Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), my complaint is acknowledged by the Permitting and Compliance Specialist -- Air Quality. She informs the Coffin Butte Landfill's Environmental Manager, and he sends a response about what they noted on that day. ***Our odor patrol on***

the Xth at XX am did not detect anything. It includes driving out Soap Creek Road. All landfill systems were operating normally that day. Let me know if you have any questions. Everyone who submits a complaint receives a message along this theme.

Odor patrol? They drive around trying to smell the landfill stench?

Olfactory fatigue occurs when the olfactory receptors in the nose become desensitized to a noxious smell after being exposed to it for a long time. The nose filters out what it considers "background noise." This is a physiological response and cannot be overridden. When this happens the person can no longer smell the landfill stench.

Geographic range. How does the Odor Patrol know where to check for landfill stench. Do they only check when they smell it? Is it a daily operation? At what time of day? Are they constantly on the move? Where do they focus? We've heard of landfill stench complaints from people driving by the landfill on 99W as well as from people in Corvallis, which is 8-12 miles away.

Altitude. It's not enough to just measure the smell at ground level. Plumes of methane have been reported from drone / flight data. How is the Odor Patrol accounting for altitude?

Weather patterns and air currents may mean that they don't smell anything at the landfill, because the wind patterns send the landfill stench up into the atmosphere. When those particles come back down they can be miles from the landfill and the Odor Patrol.

"All landfill systems were operating normally."

My nose tells me that I have landfill stench in my home.

The landfill claims the landfill systems were operating as they should.

Something doesn't compute. **Without third party methane measurements this rapidly becomes a "he said/she said" situation.**

If the landfill systems are working, then why are the neighbors in the area regularly impacted by the landfill stench? Are there leaks that the landfill operators are not aware of? This is likely based on recent EPA reports about large methane plumes above and around Coffin Butte Landfill that were never reported by the landfill operators.

Without third party methane measurements, the landfill, the surrounding counties (Benton, Polk, and Linn), and the residents do not know how much danger we are in due to methane - health impacts, fire danger, greenhouse gases that contribute to climate change, etc

Without third party methane measurements, there is no way to know the extent of the leaks...and more importantly, no way to fix those leaks.

I support SB 726-Landfill Methane Emissions.

- We need **scientific measurements** of the methane plumes above landfills - locally and throughout the state.
- We need these measurements to be **monitored by neutral third party entities**.
- We need technology that measures emissions in the entire plume, not just at ground level.

SB 726 will ensure that all areas of landfills are monitored for methane leaks by implementing modern technologies like drone equipment and satellite imaging. This will ultimately lead to better detection and timely mitigation of leaks, reducing overall emissions and strengthening Oregon's commitment to climate resilience!

Thank you to Senator Gelser-Blouin and others for sponsoring this important bill.

Respectfully Submitted

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