

Submitter: Virginia Scott  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: Senate Committee On Energy and Environment  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB726  
Date: 2/24/2025

To: Senate Committee on Energy and Environment

From: Virginia Scott

Subject: Testimony in support of SB 726, Landfill Methane Monitoring

Chair Sollman, Vice-Chair Smith, and the Members of the Senate Committee on Energy and Environment,

I am writing in support of SB 726, Landfill Methane Monitoring. Given the challenges that we have seen with the existing monitoring method as expertly illustrated in Ken Eklund's testimony, it is critical that we introduce independent advanced methane detection technology.

When the Environmental Quality Commission (Commission) establishes rules for surface emissions monitoring and mitigation of methane gas emissions from municipal solid waste landfills, I would like to encourage them to add a frequency of daily, but not more than weekly monitoring. I say this because if a new source were to start emitting methane immediately following a monitoring event, at a level shown in Ken Eklund's testimony on page 11, from the Carbon Mapper data for Plume 10, which was emitting 5.3 metric tons per hour of methane, in one day that would be 127.2 metric tons per day, or 890.4 metric tons in one week. Now let's add the 10 days to remediate the leak that is another 1, 272 metric tons for a total of 2,162.4 metric tons of methane with one week monitoring and 10 day remediation. If monitoring is kept at the current 90 day schedule this could potentially be 12,720 metric tons of methane from one point source (90 days of leaking plus 10 days to remediate).

I also believe that Environmental Quality Commission needs to establish timely enforcement if detected leaks are not remediated within the 10 day window.

Oregon lost a record number of acres to fire in 2024. Methane is a potent greenhouse gas and is something that we can act on to reduce, in order to mitigate the speed of warming. I am not just concerned about the indirect effect on fire frequency and damage; I am concerned about the landfills as a source of fire. If we

have undetected explosive levels of methane then they can easily be ignited by machinery, runaway heating of lithium batteries, the heat of composting, or by the increasing number of lightning strikes that are occurring in our state, for example. Last week I attended a Cascadia Wildfire & Urban Smoke seminar. We saw footage of the wind event with fire in Los Angeles. In one segment we saw the wind blow open a garbage can that then became part of the ember shower igniting surrounding homes. Now imagine a wind event with landfill fire and the ember shower from that mass of debris that might travel up to five miles in front of that fire and ignite our surrounding communities, fields and forests.

We cannot address something that remains amorphous and unmeasured. SB 726 enhances independent, hopefully frequent, measured monitoring of landfill methane emission and gives us the transparency to address the threat that methane poses to our people, health, environment, and livelihood.

I want to thank Senator Gelser Blouin and the other sponsors for bringing this important bill forward for your consideration.

I urge your support of SB 726.

Sincerely,

Virginia Scott – Resident, VNEQS