Testimony in Support of House Bill 3246 – March 12, 2025
Rhys Roth – Executive Director – Center for Sustainable Infrastructure
House Committee on Economic Development, Small Business, and Trade

Good morning Chair Nguyen, Vice-Chairs Isadore and Diehl, and members of the Committee.

My name is Rhys Roth and I'm executive director of the Center for Sustainable Infrastructure. Our nonprofit is dedicated to building quality infrastructure across the Pacific Northwest that supports the economy, environment, and local communities.

Collectively we spend billions of dollars every year on infrastructure, and we believe that a more integrated approach can yield better outcomes and more efficient use of public and private dollars.

I strongly support House Bill 3246 and the "dash three" amendment to provide industrial symbiosis technical assistance for up to six pilot communities across Oregon.

Industrial symbiosis is an approach to infrastructure development where one facility's waste streams—such as energy, water, and materials—become valuable resources for other businesses.

This approach has taken off in Denmark over the last several decades and we've been excited to organize several study tours to the country to see how industry is voluntarily working together to reduce waste and strengthen the economy.

Last June we brought a bipartisan delegation of Oregon community and business leaders from across the state to view this work in action in Denmark.

This group included your fellow state representatives Helm, Bobby Levy, Neron, Gamba, and Elmer, commissioners from Columbia, Klamath, and Lake counties, port directors, and several businesses that will be testifying in a few minutes.

Closer to home, Washington state has been supporting industrial symbiosis projects for the last few years in several cities including Spokane, Wenatchee, Pasco, Longview, Vancouver, and Port Angeles.

So what does this actually look like in practice? In Pasco, we worked with seven food processors to develop a state-of-the-art system for treating agricultural wastewater.

This new facility uses anerobic digesters to produce renewable natural gas. The remaining water then moves through a rotating belt of algae that pulls nitrogen and phosphorus from the water and carbon dioxide from the air to create high quality fertilizer pellets. Finally, with the nitrogen removed, the resulting clean water is ideal for irrigating 13 adjacent crop circles where local farmers grow crops such as alfalfa and corn.

This industrial symbiosis effort is so successful that Darigold is building a new $600 million butter and protein powder plant because the City of Pasco can safely handle the additional wastewater and nutrients.

So that's a Washington example. But we know that communities across Oregon, from Boardman to Astoria, NE Portland to Klamath Falls, are excited to pursue projects that support local industry, reduce waste, and have environmental benefits.

With the passage of House Bill 3246 and the "dash three" amendment we can catalyze these locally driven efforts. A small amount of technical assistance to support early planning and collaboration will maximize our infrastructure investments and ensure we are getting the best use of our public and private dollars.

Thank you for your consideration of this legislation and I'd be happy to answer any questions.

Center for Sustainable Infrastructure

TURNING WASTE INTO VALUE

WHAT IS INDUSTRIAL SYMBIOSIS?

Industrial symbiosis is a ground-breaking approach to infrastructure and economic development, where one facility's waste streams – energy, water, materials – become valuable resources for other businesses. Industrial symbiosis optimizes resource use to reduce waste, enhance environmental outcomes, and strengthen local economies.

ADDITIONAL INCOME

Industrial symbiosis converts waste into new inputs that can be sold to other businesses which reduces disposal fees and turns waste into profit.

LOCAL INNOVATION

Industrial symbiosis supports strong relationships between local businesses and communities, driving growth and innovation while doing more with existing resources.

HB 3246

Directs Business Oregon to develop a plan to identify voluntary industrial symbiosis opportunities, best practices and technologies, and barriers to adoption. The "-3" amendment will provide technical assistance for up to six communities to evaluate and prioritize industrial symbiosis infrastructure projects and develop next steps.

Oregon Communities Exploring Industrial Symbiosis

ASTORIA

The Port of Astoria plans to connect two seafood processers to capture and reuse water while recovering valuable byproducts—reducing waste, creating marketable goods, and eliminating harmful sludge.

Matt McGrath, Port of Astoria

BOARDMAN

Debbie Radie, Boardman Foods

Several major food processors in Boardman including Tillamook, Boardman Foods, and the Port of Morrow are collaborating to repurpose waste streams into energy, reduce their carbon footprint, create community value through soil amendments, and protect ground water.

EAST PORTLAND

COR Campus will serve as a hub where climate tech entrepreneurs collaborate with R&D partners to develop methods for converting waste into raw materials for sustainable industry.

Alando Simpson, COR Disposal and Recycling

KLAMATH COUNTY

Kelley Minty, Klamath County Commissioner

Klamath County will lead a project to convert harmful algae overgrowth harvested from local lakes into feedstock, which can support industries including agricultural fertilizer, biofuel, heating, and carbon sequestration.

CONTACT

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