

March 19th, 2025

Representative Lively, Chair House Committee on Climate, Energy & Environment Oregon
Legislature

Re: Quiet Clean Washington County strongly supports House Bill 2067

Chair Lively, Vice Chairs Gamba and Levy, and Members of the Committee,

Taking care of our green spaces and outdoor areas shouldn't put our health and environment at risk. Unfortunately, gas leaf blowers expose us to extremely toxic air pollutants, dangerous levels of airborne dust, and hazardous noise levels. They are particularly injurious to workers who operate them many hours a day. They also inflict harm on our soil, plants, ecosystems, and wildlife.

Quiet Clean Washington County is a volunteer effort that is newly-formed in 2024 to work to phase out gas-powered leaf blowers in Washington County. People came together because in many HOA neighborhoods that are being impacted by as many as 10+ yard maintenance crews blasting noise and pollution within the space of just a couple blocks from morning to night, day in and day out. So-called quiet neighborhoods are anything but! We are gathering members to educate the public and our elected officials about the toxic carbon and noise pollution generated by gas leaf blowers. We are keen to advocate for their elimination to promote healthier alternatives.

The downsides of gas-powered leaf blowers are substantial, and we also know that the costs to transition to cleaner and safer equipment will be a financial burden to small businesses that do much of the yard care in our county. House Bill 2067 will be a huge step to mitigate that burden, and we are thrilled that our legislators are on track to steward the transition with smart legislation like HB 2067.

We see that you have already received detailed testimony documenting the pollution harms of gas blowers, so we won't repeat them in detail here. But we will remind that there are huge health costs to unprotected workers and the climate emergency and remind you of the details provided in Environment Oregon Research & Policy Center and OSPIRG Foundations report, "Lawn Care Goes Electric: Why it's time to switch to a new generation of clean, quiet electric lawn equipment" which provided an analysis of Environmental Protection Agency data from their National Emissions Inventory. The report found that lawn and garden equipment in Oregon emitted an estimated 374 tons of harmful "fine particulate" air pollution in 2020 – an amount equivalent to the pollution emitted by more than four million typical cars over the course of a year.

In reviewing the committee session on HB 2067, we are delighted as well to see some landscape companies acknowledging harm to workers and the planet and embracing the need to transition. We assume that you know that Portland has successfully passed a gas leaf blower ban to be phased in over several years, and we absolutely aspire to see zero gas leaf blowers polluting the environment in the whole State of Oregon as soon as possible.

Chair Lively and committee members, BRAVO for your engagement and support of this serious issue. We strongly support your vote to move HB 2067 forward.

Brooke Bachelor, DO, DipABLM

Founder of Quiet Clean Washington County & Family Physician