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May 20, 2025

House Committee on Rules  
Opposition to HB3971

Dear Chair Bowman and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for offering time on your calendar for a public hearing on HB 3971.

I want to begin by acknowledging committee members Boshart-Davis, Drazan, and Elmer for raising thoughtful concerns about this "super-site" bill. We share many of those concerns and appreciate your willingness to press advocates for clear responses regarding the bill's intent, process, and potential impacts on our community.

The introduction of HB 3971 came as a surprise. Until now, we had remained hopeful that Lane County would give due weight to the outcomes of a thorough land use due diligence process and the extensive public testimony submitted over the past year. We had expected the Board to recognize the unavoidable conclusion: this proposal is fiscally unsustainable and operationally unviable. It poses significant cost burdens and risks to stakeholders, including regional taxing districts, taxpayers, residential and commercial customers, as well as small waste haulers and large-scale recyclers, many of whom you heard from during the hearing.

It is particularly disappointing to see some Lane County legislators push to bypass land use regulations for what appear to be "pet projects," while small and mid-sized businesses face steep, often prohibitive, regulatory barriers when pursuing much-needed housing and commercial development.

Our concerns about the long-term economic impacts of this proposal are serious and ongoing. Funding such a facility would require raising tipping fees, increasing costs for both residential and commercial users. More concerning is the prospect of locking in these fees over decades, which would severely limit our region's flexibility to invest in future infrastructure, innovate, and adapt. Ironically, this comes at a time when Lane County's private-sector waste and recycling companies are leading the state in materials recovery, thanks to a competitive and dynamic marketplace.

In short, HB 3971 is unnecessary. It exposes Lane County residents and businesses to long-term financial risks without delivering sustainable benefits.

Thank you for your time, consideration, and continued dedication to balanced and thoughtful policymaking.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'V. Mikkelsen'.

Vonnie Mikkelsen  
President and CEO  
Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce