

Submitter:

Lisa Arkin

On Behalf Of:

Committee:

House Committee On Rules

Measure, Appointment or Topic:

HB3971

Chair Bowman, Vice Chairs Drazan and Pham, and Members of the House Rules Committee:

I write to urge committee members to support the CleanLane facility by passing HB 3971. The purpose of this legislation is to address an inadvertent omission in Oregon land use code that currently is unable to address the innovative characteristics of a waste recycling project operated by the local government. The CleanLane project is not a new “dump” – a misunderstanding by some who have submitted written comments in opposition. CleanLane is an advanced recycling and processing facility that reduces waste and thus extends the life of the existing Short Mountain landfill.

As a result of my previous seven years of service as a Lane County Planning Commissioner, I have a comprehensive understanding of Oregon’s land use laws. As I interpret it, HB 3971 corrects an omission in local zoning that simply doesn’t account for modern-day resource recycling at this particular location. The location is not a threat to the environment, but is ideal due to its proximity to the County’s Short Mountain Landfill and its convenient access for trucks from Hwy 99 just off I-5.

Contrary to objections from some claiming that siting CleanLane on this publicly owned property would undermine both state and federal conservation goals, HB 3971 serves to facilitate a new future for waste diversion and proven technologies such as anaerobic digestion. This facility is environmentally sound in that it diverts 80,000 tons of waste from going into the landfill, thus extending the life of Lane County’s landfill by decades as well as recovering recyclable materials for other beneficial uses. In addition, CleanLane will divert food waste and other organic materials from ending up in the landfill, which will decrease landfill methane emissions by 43% while producing renewable natural gas as a marketable product.

Unfortunately, Waste Connections, the 3rd largest waste management corporation in the United States, has lawyer-ed up and lobbied-up to block the CleanLane project, despite it been repeatedly approved by Lane County Commissioners and supported by the public. Why? This corporation has a monopoly on garbage collection in Lane County and fears advancements in waste management that would expose their outdated, unsustainable garbage collection practices.

The complaint of land use incompatibility is simply a red herring meant to distract and dissuade. HB 3971 deserves your full support and a yes vote to help Lane County and Oregon meet established recycling and waste reduction goals.

Sincerely,

Lisa Arkin
Resident of Lane County