



House Rules Committee Testimony on HB 3971 May 21, 2025

Chair Bowman, Vice-Chairs Drazan and Pham, and members of the Committee, my name is Aaron Donley.

I live in Creswell and serve as the Western-Region Municipal Manager for Waste Connections, the parent company of Sanipac, which has been Lane County's largest local hauler for more than half a century.

I started at Sanipac in 2007 helping small businesses with their trash and recycling services, and over the years have had the privilege of working directly with every type of customer, from residential to commercial, multi-family, industrial and construction. I've also worked extensively with many Cities throughout the area and Lane County on implementing and encouraging recycling programs. I've served on the Association of Oregon Recyclers' legislative committee and sit on the Oregon Refuse & Recycling Association board. In short, I care deeply about sustainability and about Lane County. With that said, over the past several years I have delved deeply into the weeds of the proposed Clean Lane facility and have become only more convinced this is not the right path for our community.

I'm asking you to oppose House Bill 3971. The bill takes a local land-use dispute which is currently being appealed through the Land Use Board of Appeals (LUBA) process and lifts it out of Oregon's transparent, citizen-driven process.

It should be said that Lane County does not face any impending crisis on waste disposal that other Counties might be facing. Lane County's Short Mountain Landfill has 70+ years of remaining capacity, even before we factor in the waste-reduction gains expected from the Recycling Modernization Act and future innovations. This facility, if it performs up to its claims, would extend the life of the landfill beyond those initial 70+ years by an additional 15-20 years. In short, Lane County is by no means staring at a cliff of statewide concern that would require extraordinary super-siting legislation.

Sanipac would rather collaborate than debate. We routinely partner with Lane County and the Cities we serve on diversion programs and look forward to doing so in the future. However, like so many other waste, recycling, and organics stakeholders, businesses, residents, and municipalities throughout Lane County who have participated in the public engagement process over the past two years, we are concerned about the significant risks, impact to ratepayers, and permitting process of this specific project.

If there is a genuine statewide need to modernize zoning for mixed-waste sorting facilities, let's engage a thorough review with all counties, cities, and industry experts at the table; study best practices; and craft policy that works for everyone. HB 3971 does the opposite. It addresses a narrow, local situation with a sweeping override that will become the template for future exceptions.

I urge you to let the existing land-use appeal run its course, and, if broader reform is warranted, initiate a transparent and thoughtful statewide process.

Thank you so much for your commitment to Oregon communities.

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