

COLUMBIA CORRIDOR
A S S O C I A T I O N

20 March 2013

Senator Chip Shields
Chair, General Government, Consumer and Small Business Protection Committee
Oregon State Capitol Building
900 Court Street, NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Support for Passage of Senate Bill 814

Dear Sen. Shields, Members of the Committee:

The Columbia Corridor Association (CCA) supports SB 814. CCA appreciates the opportunity to offer testimony on how this bill would have a positive effect on both the environment and business climate in Oregon, specifically in the Portland Harbor and at area brownfields sites.

You may be aware that the Columbia Corridor is the largest economic corridor in Oregon, covering 28 square miles, with access to diverse residential neighborhoods and robust intermodal transportation facilities. Our 2,000 businesses offer above-average wages to 60,000 employees in manufacturing, transportation and warehousing, hotels and restaurants.

The Columbia Corridor's economic vitality is linked to the Portland Harbor. The Superfund project and abundance of vacant or underutilized brownfields is a drag on our economy. While we debate cleanup plans (sometimes for decades), the contamination remains, development is stifled, and the property generates less tax revenue. This is the worst of all combinations.

CCA feels that a key to cleaning up the harbor and area brownfields in a timely manner will be the ability for companies who purchased insurance to access that coverage to assist in paying for investigation, cleanup and restoration. CCA believes SB 814 would contribute to this vision by:

- establishing a timeline for handling of claims. By defining clear deadlines and processes, the claims process should run more smoothly and the insurance companies will no longer be allowed to take many months or years to investigate and accept tender of, and make payments on, environmental claims, and
- promoting settlement by affording insurers who desire to enter into early good faith settlements some protection against contribution claims by other non-settling insurers.

CCA believes this bill is the right thing to do for Oregon, making a positive step toward Portland Harbor and brownfields cleanup and restoration. We urge the Committee Members to vote yes on SB 814.

Sincerely,



Corky Collier
Executive Director