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Chair and Members of the Committee:

- Cost - The state run Oregon Vehicle Inspection program is a cost effective program. Seventy five percent of programs across the country have a higher biennial cost than the Portland fee of \$21 per certification.
 - Due to program innovations, furloughs and salary and hiring freezes, DEQ temporarily lowered the Portland fee to \$19 for a two year period (Jan. 1, 2012 through Dec. 31, 2013). Nationally, only three programs are lower than the \$19 Portland fee. (The fee will go back to \$21 in Jan. 2014.)

- Customer Service - The Oregon VIP program consistently receives outstanding customer service ratings from customers who fill out comment cards. Contract programs are focused on keeping costs down. They hire temporary staff to do the testing and experience high turnover. As a result, staff are inexperienced and don't provide the level of service that our VIP inspectors provide.
 - Here's an example of a customer comment: I went to the NE 33rd station in Portland today. From observation, like a lot people I waited until the last minute and renewed my tags on the last day of the month. From the time I pulled up to the for lack of better words guard shack to the time I was tested, I received and witnessed nothing but exemplary customer service. Such politeness and professionalism made my experience there "enjoyable". I'm sure that word does often come up in the same sentence with DEQ. They made me feel that they were glad that I was there and I actually almost felt good turning over my money to them.

I do not know if this was the result of a training program that you implemented or just a great group of employees occupy an exceptional station. Quite often, the public thinks since they pay taxes they can complain about bad service. They may be right but I pay taxes and also have a right to praise public employees when I receive good service. I wish more businesses both public and private took the same approach in dealing with the clients that was given to me today.

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- Consumer Protection – State run vehicle inspection programs are focused on operating the program to protect air quality. Contractors are in business to make money. The potential of fraud, especially with decentralized inspection programs where repair shops do the inspections is increased. Fraud is seen in varied ways in programs that are contracted, including false certification of polluting vehicles and unnecessary repairs to vehicles, which increases the cost to the motorist. Oregon’s current operation eliminates both of those fraud concerns because there is no gain for the state to falsely pass polluting vehicles or to have unnecessary repairs made to vehicles.
- Efficient operation - The Union has 90 represented staff at the Vehicle Inspection stations and Tech Center. This is down significantly from 2001-2003 when the state tested vehicles using dynamometers (Bar 31 test). The Oregon VIP program was the first in the nation to change and use vehicle’s on-board computers to test emissions. As a result fewer inspectors were needed. A state run program has the ability to make those changes while there would be extensive and costly negotiations to make changes in a contractor run program.