



P.O. Box 928 • Salem, Oregon 97308
(503) 588-6550 • (800) 452-0338 • Fax: (503) 399-4863
www.orcities.org

To: Chair Bailey, Vice-Chairs Boone & Johnson, and Members of the House Committee on Energy & Environment

From: Tracy Rutten, League of Oregon Cities

Date: March 19, 2013

Re: Testimony on HB 2048

The League of Oregon Cities strongly advocates for product stewardship programs and efforts to encourage Oregonians to responsibly dispose of household hazardous wastes. While we are supportive of the PaintCare program and increased efforts to collect increased volumes of paint through the program, we do have concerns that we hope can be addressed through further conversations with PaintCare and DEQ. For this reason, we urge the committee to consider an extension of the sunset for this program in order to allow for further work to be done in addressing local government cost-recovery for the collection of paint.

According to the DEQ website and national estimates, each household contains anywhere from three to eight gallons of hazardous materials in kitchens, bathrooms, garages and basements. Improper disposal of these products by throwing them in the garbage causes environmental concerns as well as safety concerns for sanitation workers handling such products or for children and pets who may have the ability to access hazardous wastes prior to collection and disposal.

Furthermore, the pouring of household hazards down sinks, on the ground or down a storm drain creates potential contaminations to ground and surface water as the chemicals in these products find their way back to into our public lakes, rivers and streams. For local governments this issue is critical in our ability to protect and provide for safe and affordable drinking water, provide for livable communities and to protect our natural resources.

There are several provisions of HB 2048 that we strongly support. These include: expansion in the program for the take back of aerosol cans; expansion of collection sites to ensure accessibility and equity within the program; increased clarity around education and outreach activities to promote the program; and continued oversight by DEQ, including performance measures around volume collected.

Again, we would like to see further work and discussions around the cost-recovery for local government programs that are currently collecting more than 60% of the paint. We, as local government, see ourselves as an important partner and critical component to the success of this program and would like to see further work done to ensure that local government-facilitated household hazardous waste programs are able to effectively partner in this program and that the program is equitable to consumers and fairly-administered for our ratepayers.