



US Composting Council®

From the desk of Rep. Cameron

May 31, 2013

Representative Brian L. Clem
900 Court St NE, H-284
Salem, OR 97301
Email: rep.brianclem@state.or.us

Honorable Representative Clem,

The US Composting Council (USCC) is writing to voice our concerns over SB 462.

The US Composting Council (USCC), a 501(c)6 Trade and Professional Association, is the only national organization in the United States dedicated to the development, expansion and promotion of the composting industry. The USCC has over 800 member companies, including private and municipal compost producers, equipment manufacturers, product suppliers, academic institutions, public agencies, nonprofit groups and consulting/engineering firms. Much of our focus is on promoting best management practices at composting facilities and in the production of high-quality compost.

We have recently published our Model Compost Rule Template, which sets out a framework for permitting compost facilities that is performance-based. This Template was developed using a robust process that engaged regulators and composters from across the US. Indeed, Oregon's rules were often used as examples of good performance-based rules. We are hopeful that regulatory agencies across the State of Oregon will utilize this template in developing new rules involving compost facilities. The Template can be downloaded from our website: <http://compostingcouncil.org/advocacy-resource-materials/>

SB 462 removes the DEQ's ability to make site-specific determination of the appropriateness of a composting facility if the property of the proposed facility lies within 1500 feet of a school's property line. First, the key question should be how far is the active operation from the school, not the property line. Second, it removes consideration of site-specific topography and other conditions. Finally, it does not allow for technological and process improvements to address any nuisance odors or other state performance criteria. Best management practices – for example for stormwater runoff and odor control – are effective at reducing the impacts of composting facilities on our neighbors and environment.

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We understand the recent problems at the Nature's Needs facility are prompting this legislative reaction. However, keep in mind that composting facilities and the compost products they manufacture have a positive overall environmental profile, extending the life of landfills, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and improving soils to grow healthier plants while reducing water pollution. Balancing these general benefits against the risks to a specific neighborhood are best done at the local level and not pre-empted legislatively at the state level.

Please do not hesitate to contact us to discuss this further.

Sincerely,



Lori Scozzafava
Executive Director

xc: Palmer Mason, DEQ
Kristen Leonard, Association for Oregon Recyclers