



March 20, 2015

The Honorable Richard Devlin; Co-Chair
The Honorable Dan Rayfield; Co-Chair
Ways and Means Subcommittee on Natural Resources
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Senator Devlin and Representative Rayfield:

I am writing in support of the Department of Environmental Quality's budget request under HB 5018. West Linn Paper Company is a small paper manufacturer producing high-quality, nationally-distributed paper products. We employ about 250 people locally in family wage positions, with annual revenue of \$250 million. We engage regularly with the DEQ, holding permits under both the air and water quality programs. The Department's leadership has encouraged us to make significant reductions in our air emissions and water consumption over the years – making us more sustainable, by not only environmental, but also economic measures.

As a member of the regulated community, we feel that the stability of the DEQ is tremendously important for the health of our economy. Like most Oregonians, we obviously value the benefits of a clean ecosystem – sustainable supplies of natural resources to transform into high-value products and a natural world that attracts and maintains a supply of energetic, involved employees.

Our support, however, goes beyond that. Efficient permitting is incredibly important for industry in the state. Inefficient permitting delays development for new projects and opens existing operations up to the potential for third party lawsuits. In addition, we value the benefits that accompany the DEQ's fair and reasonable enforcement arm. Without adequate regulatory enforcement, economic benefits often accrue to the least compliant, leaving ethical companies at a distinct disadvantage. Although inspections and audits can be nerve-racking, they are critical to establishing a level playing field.

Please support Oregon's communities and industry by supporting the DEQ's General Fund needs and approving the budget request in HB 5018.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brian Konen". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Brian Konen
Mill Manager