

Tri-County

Hazardous Waste & Recycling Program



Representative Helm, Chair
House Committee on Energy and Environment

January 28, 2019

RE: HB 2772

Establishing an Extended Producer Responsibility Program for Household Hazardous Waste

Chair Helm,

Thank you for holding a public hearing on this important issue. *Tri-County Hazardous Waste & Recycling Program* provides hazardous waste collection to households, businesses and farmers of Wasco, Sherman and Hood River Counties. We strongly support this proposal for companies to share in the responsibility for safe management of unwanted household hazardous waste.

This is an issue of urgency. One quarter of Oregon's 36 counties have no hazardous waste program. For comparison, our program collects four pounds per person totaling over 200,000 pounds of hazardous waste per year within our three rural counties. Wheeler, Harney, Lake, Douglas, Jefferson, Klamath, Malheur, and Umatilla Counties comprise a total population of 336,500 citizens and half the land mass of Oregon. They have neither hazardous waste facilities nor regular hazardous waste events. Based on our own per capita collection activity, we estimate that Oregon lacks a viable solution for at least 1,346,000 pounds annually of unwanted household hazardous waste from these counties. This is both an issue of watershed health and human health.

Rather than creating whole new programs, the additional resources derived from this legislation will allow communities to partner with DEQ and with existing (and future) stewardship organizations (such as PaintCare and E-Cycles) to affordably meet the expanding demand for hazardous waste collection statewide. HB 2772 would provide much needed relief to existing hazardous waste programs such as ours which struggle to pay for the increasing costs of undiminished volumes of unwanted hazardous waste. We cannot afford the full cost for proper disposal.

This is an issue of shared responsibility. Manufacturers currently pay for a small portion of the end-of-life management costs for their products. They do so in Canada, in Europe, and in most states in the U.S. for various products. Oregon already utilizes extended producer responsibility to partner with the paint and electronic industries.

Thank you for your consideration,



Steve Kramer, Chair