

Reg: HB 3239

Dear Committee Members:

I am writing in support of passage of HB 3239 to restrict the chemical processing of hemp and marijuana and ban the processing in rural areas. These types of dangerous, potential explosive, facilities belong in industrial areas with access to fire suppression systems and quick response from firefighters, not rural areas with longer response times, limited equipment, and limited water supply. I was on a volunteer fire department for 11 years in rural Washington County and still live in the same area. Fighting larger brush or field fires in the area, or even large house fires was difficult and we had to bring all our water with us. There are no fire hydrants to supply a continuous stream of water. Ponds are few to pump from and usually not near the fire, and the Tualatin River is only in the valley with few good access points. Forest fires are a great danger. We just had a major one last September on Chehalem Mountain that burned 875 acres, caused by a careless campfire on a neighboring property. My wife and I were evacuated from our home of 47 years for over a week. There is a hemp/marijuana chemical processing facility proposed to go in less than one mile from where the Chehalem Mountain/Bald Peak Wildfire started on the Yamhill/Washington County border.

Chemical Hemp/Marijuana processing facilities DO NOT belong in rural areas, especially forested areas. These facilities need to be subject to routine inspections (at least annual) for compliance with fire safety, OSHA worker safety, OLCC regulation, and County and City regulations. County inspectors are few, and would not be able to keep the schedule of inspections of these facilities need to ensure their compliance. These facilities need fire suppression systems such as sprinklers or foggers. Not something that can be done on wells in rural areas. Residents and farms near these facilities would be endangered by them, and workers in them also unless they have the types of fire suppression and inspections found only in industrial areas.

I STRONGLY advocate for the passage of HB 3239 to ensure that these chemical refineries are limited to the proper industrial facilities they should be in.

Sincerely,

John Ryan