

March 17, 2021

Dear Chair Wilde and members of the Committee on General Government,

I STRONGLY support passage of HB 3239 banning the chemical refining of hemp and marijuana from rural areas and placing statewide restrictions and regulations on such operations. The fire that happened at an ethanol plant in Cornelius yesterday is a graphic example of why these types of operations do not belong in rural areas.

<https://www.kgw.com/article/news/local/fire-ethanol-fuel-facility-cornelius/283-0a6abba3-b7ab-4d65-aeac-723e2669005c>

<https://www.q13fox.com/news/fire-at-ethanol-plant-west-of-portland-prompts-evacuations>

<https://www.koin.com/local/washington-county/fire-reported-at-ethanol-fuel-facility-in-cornelius/>

<https://www.oregonlive.com/pacific-northwest-news/2021/03/fire-reported-explosions-at-ethanol-facility-prompt-evacuation-in-cornelius.html>



Imagine for yourselves the consequences of this explosion and 3 alarm fire that prompted the evacuation of 80 homes and businesses, including the nearby Walmart, and necessitated bring in a special foam truck from the Portland International Airport with an agent called Purple K. Place this plant instead in farmland surrounded by fields of ripening grain, or the forests of Chehalem mountain, or the plains of central Oregon with no access to fire hydrants or special foam. This would not have been just a structure fire; this would have been a raging wildland fire threatening the homes and livelihoods of 100's of Oregonians.

Ethanol or Butane is what is used to chemically refine hemp and marijuana. It is highly explosive and very difficult to put out once it catches fire. Placing a facility using those chemicals in rural areas defies common sense. Please advance HB3239 and support the common-sense regulation of these facilities.