



Chair Marsh and members of the committee, for the record my name is Fred Lipper. I am writing this to testify in support of House Bill 3372.

I am representing the community of St. Johns, residents of the city of Portland, the greater area of the state of Oregon and this planet which is our home.

First, I'd like to say that I am not thoroughly familiar with the Department of Environmental Quality's charter or its contract with the government and citizens of the state of Oregon. But from my perhaps naïve viewpoint it is difficult to understand DEQ's position that it cannot deny permits based on non-payment of fines or history of prior pollution. In the construction industry, permits can be suspended or prohibited for many reasons including environmental impact and non-payment of fees or fines. DEQ certainly has the power to deny vehicle registration to owners of polluting vehicles.

So it defies logic that DEQ does not have extended power of enforcement to support their very own purpose. If the DEQ was established merely to promote citizen awareness of environmental protection, then perhaps its hands should be limited to that educational and symbolic purpose. But we know that is not why we have a Department of Environmental Quality.

We also all know that money is power. At times we see aggregated targeted funds can override less organized citizen concerns. I support business but also see that, in the name of progress, some businesses get a pass where codes and laws are concerned. This state government has the power and responsibility to represent its people. The people have a fairly common interest in clean soil, clean water, and clean air.

It is only rational to assure that the DEQ not only has the *legal ability* but also a *public mandate* to thoroughly enforce a cleaner environment.

Thank you for your attention,  
Fred Lipper  
Portland, Oregon