



The League of Women Voters of Oregon is a 101-year-old grassroots nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government. We envision informed Oregonians participating in a fully accessible, responsive, and transparent government to achieve the common good. LWVOR Legislative Action is based on advocacy positions formed through studies and member consensus. The League never supports or opposes any candidate or political party.

March 22, 2021

To: [House Committee on Energy and Environment](#)
Representative Pam Marsh, Chair

Re: **HB 3372 - 1: Strengthens DEQ's ability to deny permits to chronic violators - SUPPORT**

The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that natural resources should be controlled in order to preserve the physical, chemical and biological integrity of ecosystems and to protect public health.

We depend on the DEQ to protect the environment, maintain compliance, and sustain a consistent statewide enforcement program. They are hampered in this mission when their jurisdiction is not clearly stated concerning their authority over chronic violators. Even when a facility has a long and consistent history of violating air, water, or solid waste regulations, the DEQ believes it is still compelled to issue the permits - or face possible litigation. HB 3722 seeks to correct this.

Most often, the facilities of these chronic violators are located in communities that are already the most impacted by environmental harms and risks. The burden of righting this situation should not be on the shoulders of those most affected. It should fall to the permit holders and to the regulators, the DEQ, to protect the health and safety of all of us and of our environment. The ability to deny a permit is one tool for achieving this.

The DEQ, already underfunded, should not be utilizing their resources - our tax dollars - to repeatedly analyze the permit requests of those who have consistently demonstrated an unwillingness or inability to comply with the rules and standards. We need the DEQ's permitting program to efficiently, transparently, and capably produce high quality, protective permits. Trust in this system is built through compliance and the enforcement of permits.

We don't have time to waste when it comes to protecting our environment and repairing injustices around disadvantaged communities. We urge you to pass HB 3372 and empower the DEQ to protect us with an ability to deny permits to chronic environmental violators.

Thank you for considering our comments.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rebecca L. Gladstone".

Rebecca Gladstone
LWVOR President

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Susan Mates".

Susan Mates
LWVOR Air Quality Portfolio