



Representative Marsh, Chair
House Committee on Energy and Environment

February 5, 2021

RE: HB 2955

Establishing an Extended Producer Responsibility Program for Household Hazardous Waste

Chair Marsh,

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, with a reasonable proven solution at hand.

HB 2955 is not intended to create hazardous waste programs in underserved parts of Oregon. Whereas 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 offer regular bundled hazardous waste collection. Likewise, HB 2955 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, pharmaceutical and electronics industries.

Thank you for your consideration,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "S. Kramer".

Steve Kramer, Chair