



February 16, 2021

Senator Lee Beyer, Chair
Senate Committee on Energy and Environment
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court St. NE, H-490
Salem, Oregon 97301

Dear Chair Beyer and Members of the Committee,

I am writing on behalf of The Environmental Center in Bend, Oregon in support of Senate Bill 582 (formerly HB 2065) including all proposed amendments. Among other things, the bill would require truthful, easy-to-understand recycling labels; develop a state-wide recyclables collection list and educational programs to increase public understanding; and improve recycling opportunities in rural areas by equalizing the cost of transporting recyclable materials to markets. All of these are important to improving our state's outdated recycling system.

At The Environmental Center, we work hard to educate people on how to reduce their impact on the environment, and part of that education is waste reduction. By designing a system that promotes correct recycling habits and enables people to know what is recyclable, we can do a better job at diverting desirable and recyclable materials from the landfills and thereby lessening our impacts on the environment.

Part of my role as Rethink Waste Program Manager is to educate the public about waste reduction including how to recycle right. Confusion about labels and a lack of state-wide consistency often leads to people either being wishful recyclers, which makes the system worse, or not recycling at all, which brings more volume to Oregon's landfills. Our own Knott Landfill for Deschutes County is projected to be full by 2029, so it's particularly important for us to divert what we can as Knott is our lowest cost disposal option. Furthermore, although I am a full time employee whose job is dedicated to knowing what is and isn't recyclable, I often find recycling incredibly difficult to understand. Passing SB 582 would reduce waste and increase recycling by reducing confusion.

Another important part of SB 582 is that it finally embeds extended producer responsibility (EPR) into Oregon's overall recycling system, an important step in modernizing our system. The bill requires producers to help pay for recycling and encourages them to take responsibility for the impact of their products. EPR has already proven it works and adds real value in Oregon's e-cycles program and in our participation in the national PaintCare program. Oregonians work hard to take care of our environment--upstream solutions like EPR will make our efforts stronger. Deschutes County is a long way from the major transportation corridors and commercial centers of our state,

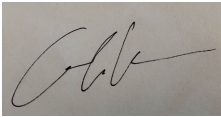
which can make it difficult to get materials to markets. We imagine more rural communities, even further from markets, have even more transportation challenges, which will be alleviated by this bill.

A modern waste prevention, reuse, and recycling system will reduce the need for using virgin materials and therefore will reduce environmental impacts. SB 582 will help achieve this goal by:

- Making it easier to know what is and isn't recyclable, the bill will create a cleaner and consistent and thus more valuable collection stream moving us closer to a closed loop system;
- Addressing equity issues by providing substantially improved access to recycling in rural areas and updating garbage and recycling collection enclosures in multifamily housing complexes; and
- Facing upstream issues by making producers responsible.

We urge you to enable Oregonians to continue to act as the proactive and enthusiastic advocates for our environment and each other that we are by passing this bill. Please vote yes on SB 582 and the proposed amendments.

Thank you for your time,



Ani Kasch, Rethink Waste Program Manager
The Environmental Center
ani@envirocenter.org