

Submitter: Sarah Deumling  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: Senate Committee On Energy and Environment  
Measure: SB488

SB 488

SB 488 is long overdue. The Covanta incinerator was paid for by local citizens many years ago to allow the burning of Marion County solid waste. Several yeas ago the plant was returned to the corporate owners, with no remuneration to Marion Co., to allow the burning of large amounts of imported medical and industrial waste which generate many times more income. Other states are apparently happy to send their most toxic waste across the country to us because they do not want to deal with it and the toxics its incineration creates in the air, the soil and the water.

Less than 5% of Oregon's medical waste, called pathological waste, is required to be burned. The remainder can be autoclaved and landfilled, causing hardly any pollution. Burning all of Oregon's pathological waste would not trigger SB 488's emissions limits. It is the importation of medical waste which would, under HB 488, require the Covanta incinerator to be regulated as a medical (rather than municipal) waste facility. To do this seems to me to be a classic "no brainer".

Initially the idea was that burning the waste would reduce the amount sent to landfills. Now by importing large amounts of the more remunerative medical waste more municipal waste will need to be sent to landfills, defeating the original purpose and creating both more varied and more toxic emissions for us all to breath.

I have no financial interest whatsoever related to this issue. For me, as a local citizen, it is a common sense issue that we should be as thoughtful as possible in protecting both our citizens and our land and environment as best we can from additional toxins of all sorts. Please pass SB 488 out of committee with a do-pass recommendation.

Sincerely,  
Sarah Deumling