



## Oppose SB 525 – Maintain Consumer Choice for Outdoor Equipment

Oregon's business environment is increasingly unfriendly, and Senate Bill 525 would force unnecessary costs on consumers, requiring the purchase of electric or battery-powered small engine equipment, which are often less effective than their fuel-powered counterparts.

SB 525 would direct the EQC to adopt rules to prohibit the sale of fuel-powered small engine equipment with 25 or less horsepower. Consequently, a wide range of industries will be forced to find suitable battery-operated alternatives. Among them are residential and commercial lawn equipment operators and those who use high pressure gas water pumps.

This bill applies much more broadly than just garden and landscaping sectors. As drafted, SB 525 would apply a zero emissions sales mandate to:

- Lawn mowers
- Chain saws
- Leaf blowers
- Boat engines
- Lawn edgers
- Emergency response equipment
- Wildfire suppression equipment
- Diesel and propane generators
- Natural gas generators
- Golf carts
- Wood splitters
- Hedge trimmers
- Pole pruners
- RV generators
- Sump pumps
- Air compressors
- Wind machines to prevent frost in orchards
- Power washers
- Aircraft ground power
- Baggage handling
- Certain forklifts
- Mining equipment not otherwise primarily used in construction
- Off-road recreational vehicles
- Certain industrial equipment
- Scrubbers and sweepers
- Towing and pushing equipment

**Banning sales of new combustion engines under 25 horsepower will lead to many unintended consequences.**

**Replacement costs:** If small nonroad engines were prohibited, individuals and businesses that rely on them would need to replace them with alternative equipment. This could involve

significant upfront costs for the new equipment, as well as the cost of disposing of or repurposing old equipment. **Example:** a gasoline-powered commercial riding mower could cost a business anywhere from \$7,000 to \$11,000, while a zero-emission equivalent often costs double. Fully electric alternatives are often not commercially available.

**Increased maintenance costs and logistical issues:** Alternative equipment may have different maintenance requirements, which could result in increased costs for individuals and businesses. **Example:** electric equipment may require charging infrastructure and regular battery replacements. In California, some landscape contracting companies estimated needing to carry 40 or more fully charged batteries to complete a day's worth of work with fully electric landscape equipment. Small businesses would need to upgrade their workshops to handle daily charging needs to this equipment—these logistical issues that are not contemplated in SB 525.

**Limited access to alternative equipment:** In some areas, alternative equipment may not be readily available or may be prohibitively expensive. **Example:** electric equipment may require charging infrastructure and regular battery replacements.

**Lack of alternatives:** In some cases, there may not be viable alternatives to small nonroad engines for certain types of equipment or operations due to their high-power requirements, extended operation times, and the need to operate them in remote and off-grid location. **Example:** gas-powered chainsaws offer more power and cutting ability than electric models, making them better suited for heavy-duty tasks like felling trees or cutting through thick logs.

**Impact on emergency response:** Prohibiting small non-road engines may have a negative impact on emergency response, particularly in situations where portable power is needed. Small non-road engines are used in a variety of equipment such as generators, pumps, and chainsaws, which are essential for emergency response operations. **Example:** in the aftermath of a natural disaster (ice storm, Labor Day fires), power outages are common and may last for an extended period. In these situations, portable generators powered by small non-road engines provide critical power to emergency response teams, essential medical equipment, refrigeration of food and medicines, and communication devices.

Scrapping and replacing entire machines is incredibly wasteful and the legislature should be encouraging least-waste options as we work to decarbonize our industries.

As a final point, our coalition is concerned that SB 525 may violate federal preemption. Federal law requires that states comply with one set of emission standards. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency could not approve the waiver of preemption required under Section 209(e) to allow Oregon to set unique or separate emission standards or requirements for small non-road engines.

**We respectfully ask for your “no” vote on SB 525.**

Associated Oregon Loggers  
Columbia Gorge Fruit Growers  
Far West Agribusiness Association  
National Wildfire Suppression Association  
Oregon Association of Nurseries  
Oregon Business & Industry  
Oregon Cattlemen's Association  
Oregon Farm Bureau Federation  
Oregon Forest Industries Council  
Oregon Landscape Contractors Association  
Oregon Manufacturers and Commerce  
Oregon Seed Council  
Oregon Small Woodlands Association  
Oregon Wheat Growers League  
Oregonians for Food & Shelter  
Pacific Propane Gas Association

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