

Submitter: Thomas Karwaki

On Behalf Of: University Park Neighborhood Association Committee

Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee On Natural Resources

Measure: HB5018

The Land Use and Livability Committees of the University Park Neighborhood Association (UPNA) endorse HB 5018 which funds the operations of the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) as submitted. In particular we ask you to approve a fee increase and to appropriate these funds for DEQ to meet its obligations under the Title V of the Federal Clean Air Act. Title V regulates emissions from the large and complex sources of air pollution. Oregon DEQ permits approximately 102 "Title V" sources in Oregon ranging from power plants to pulp & paper mills. The Clean Air Act (CAA) requires Oregon to establish and collect sufficient fees from Title V Facilities to fund all reasonable program costs. State law mirrors this requirement. For a decade the DEQ has not adjusted its fees significantly even though Federal regulations and state oversight have become more complex and inflation has risen faster than the rates have increased.

HB 5018 and HB 3229 allow the Title V rates to increase in for 2023 and 2024 and allow the Environmental Quality Commission to make adjustments to the rates in the future to assure that all Title V program costs are in fact covered by the fees charged to polluters.

Without a fee increase there will be a deficit that could lead to 1/3 of DEQ's Title V staff being laid off - or the Legislature will need to use other general funds away from sorely needed programs such as houseless, mental health or education services. The PROPOSED Title V fees are in line with those imposed by other states in EPA Region 10.

Why is this important to North Portland residents? North Portland residents breathe some of the most polluted air in the US. An exceptionally large number of North and North East Portland residents suffer from asthma and respiratory illnesses, largely due to this poor quality air. Several large facilities in North and North East Portland will be making new or renewing Title V permits and the application process takes about a year. So it is vitally important to the safety of the residents of HD 33, 43, 44 and 45 that DEQ's air quality program (Title V) be fully staffed and functioning. That is why we ask the Ways & Means Committee to fully fund the Title V program as requested by the DEQ in HB 5018.