

Submitter: K Davis
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means
Measure: SB5506

I am writing in strong support of SB 488A which will invest a small amount of money for a pilot project to test continuous air toxics emissions monitoring and reporting at the Covanta Marion waste incineration facility north of Salem.

The Covanta Marion incinerator is the nation's 4th largest medical waste incinerator. Ninety percent of the medical waste was trucked here from out-of-state, primarily California, Washington, and Canada. This makes Oregon the trashcan for plastics waste and pollution that other states don't want released into their air, lands and watersheds. Covanta is almost forty years old and much of its pollution control and monitoring equipment is "grandfathered in" under what are now outdated emissions monitoring rules. Most pollutants are tested just once a year, which is a momentary snapshot of the facility's operations and does not provide adequate testing for toxins associated with medical waste incineration.

SB 488A will provide data obtained by modern pollution monitoring technologies to protect the environment, our health and the environmental justice community downwind of Covanta. Many of the people who live nearest to the incinerator are part of rural, BIPOC and agricultural communities in the mid-Willamette Valley. They are bearing the burden of unknown amounts of heavy metals, dioxins and acids resulting from the burning of medical and municipal waste.

Oregon must invest in SB 488A so that the DEQ can fulfill its duty to carry out the Cleaner Air Oregon regulations. The relatively small amount of money requested by the agency is needed for essential work to continue. I ask for your support of SB 488A.