



*The League of Women Voters of Oregon, established in 1920, is a grassroots nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government. We envision informed Oregonians participating in a fully accessible, responsive, and transparent government to achieve the common good. LWVOR Legislative Action is based on advocacy positions formed through studies and member consensus. The League never supports or opposes any candidate or political party.*

February 3, 2026

To: [Rep. John Lively](#), Chair, Vice Chairs [Rep. Mark Gamba](#) and [Bobby Levy](#)  
Members of the [House Committee On Climate, Energy, and Environment](#)

Re: [HB 4102](#) – DEQ Permitting, Use of Outside Contractors Without Sideboards – OPPOSE

The League of Women Voters has strong positions on both water quality and quantity, as well as air quality, solid waste, and hazardous waste. LWVUS was active in encouraging passage of the Clean Air and Clean Water Acts and continues to advocate to protect that foundational work. In Oregon, League members have studied these issues, recognizing the value of having clean air, clean water, and land for public health for today and generations to come.

In 2025 we supported an increase in permit staff in the agency's budget which this legislature addressed. As we see retirements and staff turnover at DEQ, it is critical that positions be filled and training begun on new permit writers. It takes 6-12 months to fully train new permit writers due to the technical nature of permits and the myriad of businesses and others who have different processes and needs to be able to meet our important public health and environmental protections. Those permit writers need to accommodate those differences while also assuring the permit standards are met on behalf of all Oregonians. It is because of the technical nature of this work that we express great concern regarding the use of outside contractors to do this important work, especially if those contractors are paid by the regulated businesses. It is why we have always supported shared costs for DEQ permitting.

The League believes in a strong economy. We also believe that the government has a role in efficiently implementing state laws and rules. We believe both objectives can be met. **We ask that you reject HB 4102 unless significant amendments are made to address the public's concerns.**

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss this legislation.

Barbara Klein  
Acting President LWVOR

Peggy Lynch  
Natural Resources Coordinator

Cc: [Leah Feldon](#), Director, Dept. of Environmental Quality