



February 4, 2026

House Committee on Climate, Energy, and Environment
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Support for HB 4144, Safe Battery Collection and Recycling

Chair Lively, Vice-Chairs Gamba and Levy and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of Beyond Toxics and our members I am writing in strong support of HB 4144 Safe Battery Collection and Recycling. Beyond Toxics is a statewide environmental and climate justice advocacy organization representing over 7,000 members throughout Oregon.

This bill is urgently needed to address battery-caused fires that put garbage and recycling workers and public and private infrastructure at risk in already wildfire-prone landscapes throughout Oregon. HB 4144 creates a battery extended producer responsibility program. It requires battery manufacturers to manage and pay for the collection, transport, and recycling of single use and rechargeable batteries to reduce fires.

In 2025, there were 49 battery related fires at the Short Mountain Landfill here in Lane County. These fires are easy to identify due to their characteristics and require special procedures to extinguish. Lithium battery thermal runaway fires are an extreme emissions event, releasing highly toxic gases and particles that exceed the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)-permissible exposure limits (PEL). Additionally there are risks associated with fires and toxic substances already in landfills. A battery EPR program will reduce battery fires at our transfer stations and increase safety for our workers and facilities.

There is no general fund impact as a result of this bill. Like other EPR programs in Oregon, the program is fully funded by producers of covered products under the bill. DEQ utilizes other funds for initial implementation of the program. These funds are reimbursed by producer fees once the program is up and running.

HB 4144 was developed through collaboration with Oregon's solid waste industry, local governments, and national battery producers. This bill represents a united effort to safeguard communities, garbage and recycling workers and infrastructure.

We appreciate the Committee supporting Oregonians to reduce battery-caused fire risks by passing HB 4144.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Eisele

Jennifer Eisele, Communities and Ecosystems Program Manager
Beyond Toxics