



February 6, 2026

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

On behalf of the City of Central Point, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of HB 4144.

Battery fires have become an increasingly common, and dangerous, problem in Oregon's waste and recycling system. Discarded batteries routinely spark fires in garbage trucks, transfer stations, and recycling facilities. When those fires happen, they put workers at risk, damage critical infrastructure, and often require emergency response resources that could otherwise be serving our communities.

In Southern Oregon, where wildfire risk is already a constant concern, preventing avoidable ignition sources is especially important. A fire that starts in a collection truck or waste facility doesn't just threaten that site; it creates broader public safety risks in a region where fire conditions can escalate quickly.

Cities like Central Point rely on a regional solid waste and recycling system. Fires that occur anywhere in that system have the possibility of leading to service disruptions, higher costs, and increased safety risks that ultimately affect our residents and ratepayers.

HB 4144 helps address this problem where it starts: in homes, garages, and businesses where batteries are often thrown away without people realizing the danger. By creating safe, convenient, no-cost battery collection options and increasing public awareness about proper disposal, the bill reduces the likelihood that batteries will ignite fires downstream.

For communities like Central Point, HB 4144 is about preventing avoidable fires, protecting workers and infrastructure, and reducing risk before it reaches our neighborhoods and first responders.

For these reasons, the City of Central Point respectfully urges your support for HB 4144.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Chris Clayton
City Manager, City of Central Point