

**Emerson Levy**  
**STATE REPRESENTATIVE**  
House District 53



**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

Thursday, February 5, 2026

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

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss HB 4144 with you this morning. This legislation is incredibly important to my district, but it also addresses a statewide issue. At its core, this bill provides for safer management of used batteries, it provides more convenient and accessible battery collection for consumers, it recycles and recovers precious materials within the batteries, all while saving money for local governments.

This bill addresses a growing public safety issue caused by lithium batteries entering our waste system. These batteries are ending up in garbage trucks, transfer stations, and landfills, and they're causing fires. In Deschutes County alone, we saw 54 fires last year linked to battery disposal. These fires put workers at risk, damage equipment, disrupt services, and drive-up costs for local governments.

HB 4144 takes a proactive, common-sense approach to preventing these fires before they start. The bill establishes a statewide battery recycling program designed specifically to keep hazardous batteries out of the waste stream. Instead of reacting to fires after they happen, costing tax-payer dollars to put them out, this program focuses on prevention.

One important thing to note is that this program is designed to be cost-effective. Lithium batteries contain valuable minerals that can be recovered and reused, which helps offset the cost of recycling.

The bill makes recycling easier for the public. It creates convenient, free battery collection sites across the state, so people have a safe and accessible way to dispose of batteries instead of tossing them in the trash.

HB 4144 was developed through collaboration with Oregon's solid waste and recycling industry, local governments, and national battery producers. This is a united effort to protect workers, infrastructure, and communities while modernizing how we deal with a rapidly growing waste challenge. I urge your support for HB 4144. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Emerson Levy

State Representative, HD53

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "E. P. Sawyer". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "E" and "S".