

From: [The Roosevelt Society](#)
To: [Coffin Butte Landfill Appeals](#)
Subject: Submission for proponent for Coffin Butte Appeal
Date: Tuesday, September 30, 2025 4:16:24 PM
Attachments: [Written Testimony in Support of the Coffin Butte Landfill Expansion.docx](#)

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello,

Please see attached testimony for the record. It was too long for the online submission tool.

Thank you.

Written Testimony in Support of the Coffin Butte Landfill Expansion

My name is John Sullivan. I spent more than 40 years in the private sector working in the solid waste industry, beginning in 1983 and ultimately retiring in 2024 as a General Manager overseeing trucking, hauling, and street sweeping operations in Keizer. Over those four decades, I worked at every level of industry starting with maintenance, moving into operations, and later into senior management. That work gave me a firsthand understanding of the systems, infrastructure, and planning it takes to handle waste responsibly and keep essential services both reliable and affordable.

I also have had the opportunity to serve in public office. I was a member of the Millersburg Planning Commission from 2013 to 2018 and then served on the Millersburg City Council from 2018 to 2024. In both roles, I was faced with the same kind of challenge you as commissioners are facing today: making tough leadership decisions that balance immediate community needs with the long-term stability and sustainability of critical services. These are not easy votes. They require a willingness to weigh the facts, listen to expert voices, and make choices that may not always be the most popular in the moment, but are essential for the county's future.

Through the lens of both my private- and public-sector experience, I can say with confidence that Coffin Butte has proven itself to be a good actor. I have seen firsthand how this facility has adapted, invested, and improved over time. They have consistently met requirements, responded to feedback, and strengthened their operations. Over the past several years, they have gone above and beyond to enhance their expansion application, addressing concerns directly and working collaboratively with county staff and community stakeholders. That progress was recognized in June, when county planning staff recommended approval of the application, noting that Republic Services and Coffin Butte had met the standards required of them.

It is important to recognize what that recommendation really means. Having had the honor of serving on a Planning Commission and City Council, I believe staff recommendations should be taken seriously. Staff are not swayed by politics or noise—they review the facts, the application, the compliance history, and the standards set by the county and other regulatory agencies. Their approval speaks volumes about the strength of this proposal and the proven track record of the operator.

We must also talk about the consequences of inaction. Without expansion, Benton County loses local control over one of the most essential services it provides—responsible solid waste management for residents and the community. That means higher costs for families and businesses, reduced oversight, and fewer opportunities to invest in modern technology and environmental improvements here at home. As someone who has spent decades in the solid waste industry, I can tell you that pushing critical infrastructure past its limits always leads to the same outcome: rising costs, declining reliability, and loss of accountability. Expansion is how we avoid that future.

This project is not just about adding space. It is about securing stability, planning responsibly, and ensuring that Benton County remains in control of its waste management future. Expansion gives us the opportunity to continue building on recent improvements, expand renewable energy recovery, and invest in stronger environmental performance. That is what good stewardship looks like.

An overwhelming number of Benton County residents also recognize this. They understand that expansion is a practical, common-sense solution that protects affordability and accountability for the long term. This is the kind of decision that ensures the system we have today can continue to serve us tomorrow.

I urge you to approve the Coffin Butte expansion.

Respectfully,
John Sullivan