

LU-24-027 IN-PERSON TESTIMONY SUBMITTAL COVER SHEET

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IDENTIFIER: TO 660

Good evening, Commissioners.

I am speaking in **strong opposition** to the Coffin Butte Landfill expansion.

On **June 13, 2023**, this Board **unanimously accepted** the findings of the **BCTT Workgroup**—findings that remain clear and relevant today:

First: Coffin Butte has **14 to 16 years of permitted capacity remaining**—there is **no immediate need** for expansion.

Second: The **County has full latitude** under its own code to interpret ambiguities and **deny this expansion**. And you have been presented with more than enough evidence during this hearing to do so.

The decision belongs to **you, not to Republic Services, and not to staff or counsel who would defer to them**.

Your **constituents, your Planning Commission, and now your state legislators—Senator Sara Gelser Blouin and Representative Sarah Finger McDonald**—have all spoken with one voice: expansion would trade **permanent environmental harm** for only a few additional years of landfill life.

Our legislators' letter of testimony makes this explicit: **denial will not deprive Benton County of disposal options**—Republic is contractually required to accept our waste through **2040**. The burden of adaptation belongs with a corporation earning **billions in profit**, not with Benton County residents.

Our legislators' letter also covers **HB 3794** — a bill they sponsored which became effective on September 26, 2025. The bill establishes the Task Force on Municipal Solid Waste in the Willamette Valley to study solid waste options in our region. This is the beginning of a regional process that will use the next 15 years of landfill life to forge solutions for managing solid waste across the Willamette Valley. **It anticipates the closure of Coffin Butte** and the need to develop a responsible, forward looking waste management plan for our region.

You are being pressured to manage Republic's business problem. But you were elected to protect the **people of this County** — not Republic's balance sheet. This is **not about need** — it is about Republic protecting market share at the expense of our community.

The **2040 Thriving Communities Initiative** calls on us to ensure *vibrant, livable communities; high environmental quality; and community resilience*.

Approving this expansion would violate every one of those core values.

HB 3794 has already set in motion a regional planning process for the post-Coffin-Butte era; the responsible work is underway — **expansion would pre-empt it.**

Commissioners, you have both the **authority** and the **moral responsibility** to act in alignment with your community, your legislative partners, and your own adopted vision for a thriving Benton County.

Please deny this expansion.

I yield the remainder of my time to others who may need it.