

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

Received From: Katharine Jefferts Schori

Date: 23 Oct 25

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

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21 October 2025

Dear Benton County Commissioners,

I came to Corvallis in 1974, as a doctoral student in Oceanography. My Ph.D led me to expand into the wider relationships between living creatures and their environments.

I note the ongoing realities in the current debacle around waste management in this part of Oregon, as well as many parts of the earth. Siting dumps in high rainfall areas and wetlands is highly inappropriate. The eastern part of Oregon has habitat far more accommodating to effective stewardship of many kinds of waste. The leachate in wet areas moves far and wide; it's far easier to manage in dry climates. Continuing to pile up more waste that arrives from other wet areas only exacerbates the difficulties, and increases the hazards for those who live in this area. When other more suitable locations readily exist, allowing Coffin Butte Landfill to expand is irresponsible and unduly burdens residents of all species and the environments in which they live.

Benton County has been targeted for quick fixes, and lack of accountability toward the human and other creatures in this area, particularly when waste is collected from a far larger area than Benton County itself. It's not only unjust, but bad science.

The latter part of my career moved me into justice work across the world, as the Presiding Bishop of The Episcopal Church. Today this community includes 21 nations and territories, linked with the worldwide Anglican Communion (85-110 million people, the 4th largest Christian communion in the world). All peoples of faith are called to seek justice for their own people AND their neighbors, far and near. The realities in Benton County are the result of venality, and lack of caring for other people and creatures. Most of us would call it sin. We have been created to care for our neighbors as we would ourselves.

The Rt. Rev. Katharine Jefferts Schori, Ph.D.