

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

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Good evening Commissioners Wyse, Malone, Shepherd -

First I want to speak tonight on what I will call "Republic's Leachate Problem."

Concern about toxic leachate leaving the landfill site and ending up in the Willamette River has *repeatedly* been brought up in written testimony - yet Republic Services AND County Staff continue to completely IGNORE this. They probably hope that you will think that it is somehow covered by addressing *groundwater* concerns, but it is not.

And the *reason* Republic and Staff ignore this is because it is yet another elephant in the room. *They can't make go away* the fact that every year literally tens of millions of gallons of leachate are trucked offsite and enter the Willamette River, effectively untreated. [Please refer to Mark Yeager's written testimony, submitted to the record tonight, for technical details. Mr. Yeager is well qualified to speak on this topic.]

Republic talks up its monitoring wells, used to watch for signs of leachate escaping into groundwater on adjacent properties... but here's a question for you: if leachate is trucked offsite, does it have "no impact" because it leapfrogs Republic's definition of "adjacent"?

Obviously, all that leachate leaving the landfill site has a SIGNIFICANT impact, and this is a perfect example of why Republic's definition of "adjacent" doesn't hold water (or should I say, "doesn't hold leachate?")

Also obviously, a new landfill south of Coffin Butte Road will generate its own leachate, which makes Republic's "Leachate Problem" even larger.

Republic has the *burden of proving* that the proposed use does not impose an undue burden on public facilities or utilities. The municipal treatment plants are public utilities; and the Willamette River is most definitely a public facility. Republic cannot prove all that leachate leaving the site is not an undue burden on either.

In a similar vein, I want to talk about "Republic's Landfill Gas Problem."

Many, many written testimonies submitted to you — and which Staff has told us you all have read — point out the numerous toxics contained in Landfill Gas. Those testimonies also include images and explanations of the methane gas plumes seen from space, stretching far beyond the so-called “adjacent” properties. Plumes that are not intermittent, but ongoing. [Please refer to Ken Eklund’s “Carbon Mapper explainer” in the record on August 19, testimony number BC01_T0007]

Methane, a potent greenhouse gas, is only one part of the toxics in landfill gas, but an inextricable part, so the methane plumes are a perfect way to “see” how far the landfill gas travels. And note that Carbon Mapper only tracks methane emitted *at super-emission levels*, so the actual extent of landfill gas plumes is much larger.

Which means all those toxic elements in the landfill gas - including the “forever chemicals” PFAS - extend not only over all Republic’s “adjacent” properties, but far beyond them. Those toxic elements will eventually descend and settle on the land; they do not remain airborne indefinitely. And so they do not fall under EPA’s or DEQ’s purview of “Air Quality” in terms of monitoring and enforcement.

The expansion parcel will also be leaking landfill gas; if Republic can’t stop the leaks from the existing landfill, they most definitely won’t be able to stop them on this new landfill.

Republic Services has the *burden of proving* that the proposed use does not seriously interfere with adjacent properties. The adjacent properties and beyond are blanketed daily with an unknown amount of toxics settling on them from escaping landfill gas.

The health impacts caused by Republics’ “leachate and landfill gas problems” cannot be ignored. Please: do not approve this expansion application.

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