

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

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## Comments of the Institute of Energy and Resource Management

Philipp Schmidt-Pathmann is currently the President and CEO of the Institute for Energy and Resource Management (IeRM), a non-profit, 501c3 organization located in Newcastle, Washington. He is a waste management expert with thirty years hands on experience in solid waste management, including developing facilities, conducting technical studies, policy development, guest lecturer, keynote speaker, led several delegations to Europe and serving as an expert witness. Stephen Gerritson is the former Executive Director of the Lake Michigan Air Director's Consortium, a regional agency concerned with air pollution in the Lake Michigan basin. He was a member of the federal Clean Air Advisory Committee during the Clinton and Bush administrations.

This letter is submitted in response to matters raised on the record of the Benton County Board of Commissioner's hearing of October 22 and 23, 2025.

With respect to the application for a conditional use permit to expand the Coffin Butte Landfill, I have the following comments:

1. The landfill currently emits a mixture of gases produced by the decomposition of organic wastes. These gases include methane, carbon dioxide, volatile organic compounds (VOCs) such as benzene and toluene, hydrogen sulfide, and hazardous air pollutants, such as vinyl chloride.
2. Landfill gas collection systems are at best able to capture 50% of the gases emitted.
3. These exceedances have been documented by USEPA monitoring and by Carbon Mapper, using aircraft overflights.
4. These exceedances, plus windblown fine particulates, cause respiratory ailments, neurological problems, foul odors, and the risk of cancer.
5. The applicant has provided no evidence that these impacts will be mitigated should the request for expansion be granted. For this reason, the expansion would violate BCC 53.215(1).
6. The landfill currently produces leachate, the result of rainwater mixing with organic wastes. The leachate is supposed to be captured and taken to a wastewater treatment facility.
7. Because part of the landfill does not have a clay liner, but is built on basalt rock that is fractured, a portion of the leachate escapes and flows into the groundwater.
8. Leachate contains toxins including VOCs in liquid form, PFAs (chiefly flame retardants, also known as "forever chemicals") and arsenic. Elevated levels of arsenic have been observed in leachate from Coffin Butte landfill.
9. Leachate from the landfill has been traced to creeks in the vicinity, posing a risk to neighboring homes, farms, and wildlife.
10. The applicant has provided no evidence that these impacts will be mitigated should the request for expansion be granted. For this reason, the expansion would violate BCC 53.215(1).

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