

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

Received From: Kathleen Van Camp / Sovereign

Date: 10/9/25

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IDENTIFIER: T0291

October 5, 2025

Dear Benton County Commissioners,

Please do not approve the landfill expansion requested by Republic Services. Our county should not bare the brunt of the economic and environmental costs for accepting even more garbage from across the state. One of the most disturbing aspects of agreeing to the request is the removal of the tonnage caps allowing unlimited garbage to be dumped onto our county.

While we appreciate when Republic services takes the trash away from our home, we do not appreciate their relentless pursuit of expansion at the incalculable price of the health of the citizens, the air, water and land of Benton County and surrounding areas. The resulting economic impacts of refusing Republic's request again, should not be particularly grievous, as the people collecting, burying, managing the trash, gas, recycling, and composting will continue to be needed. Whether our homes and businesses have the trash sent to Coffin Butte or better yet, by train to the vast desert in Eastern Oregon, where the water table does not sit a foot below the proposed hole in the earth Republic wants to dig, economic trash activity will continue.

The unfortunate location of the Coffin Butte landfill threatens the surrounding agriculture areas, the homes, the forest, the wildlife, businesses and vital water sources for the Willamette Valley. The costs to remediate any one of the possible environmental disasters likely to occur, boggle the mind. Here are just a few of the things that may go wrong. An uncontrolled trash fire spread to forest fire, over-flowing leachate ponds in prolonged and windy rainstorms, the pollution of the water ways from the aforementioned ponds and the continual run-off from washing of the Republic Services vehicles, and release of toxic gases, above what is currently happening, into the atmosphere, threatening the health of people, livestock and wildlife. Many of these possible events are much less likely to occur when a landfill is situated in a dry climate. The water table is tens and tens of feet below the bottom of the trash pit. There is unlikely to be a forest or wetland right next to the landfill. There is much less leachate as there is little rain to contribute to the toxic stew. Damage to wildlife is lessened, though nothing is without costs.

Republic Services has not proved to be a particularly good Stewart of the Coffin Butte landfill. Trash blows across roadways and onto neighbors' properties. They said they could put up more fencing to contain the problem, but not until the county agrees to its expansion demands. Not one filled trash pit has been permanently closed, they just have flapping tarps strewn about, allowing toxic plumes of methane and who knows what into the air. Their relentless goal appears to be to accept as much garbage as possible, at the most they can possibly charge and then dump the entire mess onto Benton County. More and more surrounding land, polluted by its landfill neighbor will be condemned, property values will fall, and the landfill operators will continue to press for more expansion.

Please stop Republic Services pursuit of profits at the expense of Benton County. There are other solutions in Western Oregon for trash disposal and management, just a train track away.

Sincerely,

Kathleen Van Camp

Michael Sovereign

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