



CITY OF PORTLAND
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES



1120 SW Fifth Avenue, Room 1000, Portland, Oregon 97204 ■ Dan Saltzman, Commissioner ■ Dean Marriott, Director

April 15, 2009

Ways and Means Committee
Subcommittee on Natural Resources
900 Court St., NE
Salem, OR, 97301

Dear Co-Chairs Walker and Jenson and Members of the Committee:

The City of Portland Bureau of Environmental Services (BES) is writing in support of the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality's (DEQ) 2009-2011 budget. DEQ provides a valuable service to all Oregonians by protecting our natural environment. BES staff routinely work with DEQ staff on a variety of issues including water quality, brownfields, Superfund, and toxics reduction. DEQ professionals are dedicated to environmental protection while working collaboratively with a variety of stakeholders.

We are supportive of all of the water quality budget requests included in the Governor's Recommended Budget, particularly the proposal to reauthorize bonds in support of the Clean Water State Revolving Fund. These funds allow municipalities to make infrastructure improvements that directly improve water quality.

DEQ has been constrained in carrying out its mission as budgets and resources have declined over the years. Unfortunately these next two years will be no different, and many important programs will be without the funding they need to achieve their goals. For example, the Governor's Recommended Budget does not include a position for the ongoing implementation of work required under SB 737, a bill passed by the 2007 legislature requiring DEQ to conduct a study of persistent bioaccumulative and toxic pollutants. The current effort to develop a list of persistent priority pollutants is funded by a two year surcharge on Oregon's 52 largest municipal wastewater treatment plants, of which Portland is one. Ongoing resources will be needed to review pollutant reduction plans, provide technical assistance and ensure that reduction plans are appropriately integrated into facility wastewater discharge permits. Despite the financial commitment of the state's municipal wastewater treatment plants, reducing toxics in our environment as mandated by SB 737 and other initiatives, is unlikely without long-term state funding.

The budget reduction options included in the Governor's Recommended Budget, as well as those reflecting 30 percent cuts of General and Lottery funds are sobering. If implemented, these cuts will greatly impact the ability of DEQ to maintain or enhance Oregon's air, land or water quality, and provide support and services to municipalities and private industry.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Dean Marriott
Director, Bureau of Environmental Services