

Submitter: William Gifford
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Energy and Environment
Measure: SB630

Senator Janeen Sollman, Chair
Senator Lynn Findley, Vice Chair
Senate Energy & Environment Committee

Senators Sollman and Findley and members of the committee, this testimony is in support of Senator Meek's bill, SB 630.

On May 28, 2015, a group of Oregon City residents held a meeting and were inspired to form a core group dedicated to the task of building a Foundation to serve as advocates for our parks and trails, as well as our historic, cultural heritage, and recreation sites.

One might think that background would support me proposing that the landfill site at the north end of Oregon City should just become a park; historically that has been the case with many landfills. However, this former landfill, developed as the "Abernethy Green project" proposes to offer wetlands, open spaces, a central square and gathering spaces, as well as park areas and pedestrian paths. At the same time, it will meet the needs for housing, retail, indoor recreation, and a dedicated, ADA-compliant pathway to the End of the Oregon Trail Interpretive Center.

This environment-degrading landfill needs to be cleaned up; the 62 acres must be developed into a much-needed mixed-use housing development to meet the challenges of this growing city. The project will require public and private partnerships for creative minds and modern technology to work in conjunction.

Senator Meek's innovative bill forms a public-private partnership with Oregon City's Abernethy Green project which will involve the DEQ throughout the planning phase, during construction, and during the long-term operations.

I urge your support of SB 630 so that former landfills will in the future be seen as opportunities for progress done right.

Thank you for your consideration.

William Gifford

Clackamas County Economic Development Commissioner

Founding Member, Oregon City Business Alliance

Founding member, Oregon City Parks Foundation