

COLUMBIA CORRIDOR
A S S O C I A T I O N

April 12, 2007

The Honorable Kurt Schrader, Co-Chair
Ways and Means Committee
900 Court Street NE, S-209
Salem, OR 97301

The Honorable Mary Nolan, Co-Chair
Ways and Means Committee
900 Court Street NE, H-486
Salem, OR 97301

Support for Governor's Recommended Budget Policy Package No. 122; Funding for DEQ's Stormwater Program

Dear Co-Chairs Schrader and Nolan:

I am writing to you on behalf of the Columbia Corridor Association (CCA) to urge you to support the Governor's Recommended Budget Policy Package No. 122, which would provide crucial funding for DEQ's stormwater program.

The Columbia Corridor is home to 2500 businesses with 60,000 employees and is a Regionally Significant Industrial Area (RSIA) as well as one of the most important economic corridors in the state. Many CCA members hold 1200-COLS permits, unique to the Columbia Slough area.

Stormwater runoff can pick up soil and contaminants, which may pollute the streams, rivers, lakes, and sloughs into which runoff flows. Nationally and in Oregon, stormwater is a significant source of pollution. Coordinated, innovative and efficient stormwater management is essential to improving water quality in Oregon.

Under federal and Oregon law, certain municipalities, industries, and other sources must obtain and comply with stormwater discharge permits, which in Oregon are issued by DEQ. These permits require DEQ's management and technical support. Due to an increase in permitting needs and litigation-driven policy changes, DEQ has lacked the adequate resources to develop an effective stormwater strategy and respond to increasing program demands. This has prevented DEQ from developing and implementing an effective, efficient stormwater program.

CCA is concerned that without additional personnel for DEQ's stormwater program, DEQ will not have the resources to provide assistance to stormwater sources, to develop programs to effectively address specific stormwater problems, or to create the needed program efficiencies

that will allow DEQ, municipalities, industry, and the public to devote more of their resources to projects that directly benefit water quality.

The proposed budget request of \$3.1 million (\$1.5 million in general funds and \$1.6 million in increased permit fees) will provide an additional 5 limited-duration positions (2 FTE) and 16 permanent positions (15.5 FTE).

Thank you very much for considering this important budget request.

Sincerely yours,

Corky Collier

cc: The Honorable Richard Devlin
The Honorable Jackie Dingfelder
Mr. Paul Siebert
Ms. Stephanie Hallock