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## **Oregon Passes Producer-Funded Battery Recycling Program**

SALEM, Ore. - Today, the Oregon Legislature passed landmark legislation establishing a statewide Battery Producer Responsibility Program. House Bill 4144 addresses the growing threat of lithium battery fires, strengthens Oregon's recycling system, and allows for the recovery and reuse of valuable materials found in batteries.

HB 4144 requires producers of certain batteries and battery-containing products to participate in a producer responsibility organization that will fund and manage a convenient, statewide battery collection and recycling program. The new law shifts costs from local governments and ratepayers to producers, improves public safety, and ensures valuable materials are responsibly recovered and reused.

"This bill addresses a growing public safety issue caused by lithium batteries entering our waste system. These batteries are ending up in garbage trucks, transfer stations, and landfills, sparking fires that not only endanger workers and the environment, but also cost taxpayers at least \$10,000 per incident," said Rep. Levy (D-Central Oregon). "In Deschutes County alone, we saw 54 fires last year linked to battery disposal."

Over the past decade, Oregon has seen a sharp increase in battery-caused fires at solid waste and recycling facilities. These incidents threaten workers and nearby communities, damage or destroy critical infrastructure, increase insurance costs, and in some cases jeopardize facility operations altogether.

“This bill is a critical step in prevention of hazardous situations,” said Sen. Courtney Neron Misslin (D - King City, Sherwood, Tigard, Wilsonville). “We must do everything we can to minimize risk, manage waste proactively, educate the public, and prevent environmental contamination and fires.”

Under the new program:

- At least 95% of Oregon residents will have a battery collection site within 15 miles of their home.
- Every city with a population of 4,000 or more will have at least one collection site.
- Producers must fund consumer education and outreach to ensure safe disposal.

The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality will oversee implementation, adopt rules, and ensure compliance through a dedicated Battery Producer Responsibility Fund.

House Bill 4144 now moves to the governor’s desk for signature.

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