



International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers
15937 NE Airport Way
Portland, OR 97230

January 9, 2024

Board of Commissioners, Columbia County
Columbia County Land Development Services
Attn: Planning
230 Strand Street
St. Helens, OR 97051

Re: *NEXT Renewable Fuels Local Land Use Permits*

Dear Columbia County Commissioners:

My name is Garth Bachman and I am a resident of Columbia County. I am also a Journeyman Inside Wireman and the Business Manager/Financial Secretary for the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Local 48 (IBEW 48). I represent 5,407 members that work in the electrical construction industry in Oregon and Southwest Washington.

IBEW 48 has been and continues to be a strong supporter of NEXT Renewable Fuels' efforts to build a renewable diesel production facility at the Port Westward site. It is an amazing opportunity for the local economy, the environment, and of course our members. We have 218 members that live in Columbia County, another 74 in Clatsop County, and 237 in Cowlitz County that stand at the ready along with the rest of the Building Trades to build this facility.

The size and duration of this project will allow those members the chance to work near home and spend more time with their families instead of commuting. It will also give local residents a chance to start in the Trades through our state-of-the-art apprenticeship programs, which will provide them with a career that offers family wages, health care, and the ability to retire with dignity.

As important as these work opportunities are for my members, I understand that this isn't just about the thousands of construction jobs that will be created by this project. The 240 permanent jobs at the facility and the hundreds of indirect jobs that come with this private investment will have a meaningful and lasting impact on the economy. More jobs mean more local spending, which then leads to more economic development and more funds for improvements to public assets like roads, parks, and schools. This is my home, and I want it to be a successful, thriving community. This project will help make that possible.

Local 48 applauds the effort, diligence, and investment made by NEXT Renewable Fuels, the numerous government agencies, and the public to ensure all concerns are addressed and mitigated through this permitting process. We want Oregon to continue to be a leader in the clean energy transition and we believe the addition of the NEXT Renewables Fuels project is a vital component to meeting state and federal goals. Therefore, I would respectfully ask the Board of Commissioners



to approve the necessary NEXT permits without delay so we can start building a cleaner future for our communities while creating positive economic growth right here in Columbia County.

Sincerely,



Garth Bachman
Business Manager/
Financial Secretary

GB:lk
OPEIU#111/AFL-CIO

