

Board of Commissioners meetings

January 10, 2024 · 9:32 AM · ID: 357054141

Chat

Columbia County sent a chat · 10:00 AM

yes, we can hear them. we will unmute when it is time for testimony. thank you

Graham Trainor, Oregon AFL-CIO sent a chat · 11:13 AM

Testimony - Columbia County Commission Support for Land Use Permits - NEXT Renewables
Graham Trainor, President, Oregon AFL-CIO January 10, 2024 Chair, Commissioners - my name is Graham Trainor and I have the distinct honor of serving as President of the Oregon AFL-CIO, the statewide federation of labor unions representing over 300,000 working people in every sector of Oregon's economy. Thank you for the opportunity to share a few words this morning in support of these local land use permits being awarded for the exciting NEXT Renewable Fuels project at Port Westward. And my apologies for not being able to be there in person. I submitted a letter of support last week as well, and in the interest of time I'll share just a few additional thoughts about the significance of this project from our perspective. The Oregon Labor Movement remains laser focused on creating a fair and just economy for ALL Oregonians. This requires us to analyze potential development projects, understand their goals and objectives, and engage with employers and the business community when there is a shared respect for - and understanding of - the highly skilled and trained workforce any project will require - both during and after the construction phase. This is rooted in a belief that when working families do well...and have access to good union jobs with healthcare and retirement security - our state and our communities do well too. And so when a project like this one comes around - aimed at helping our economy transition to a cleaner energy future and to be less reliant on fossil fuels AND when the developer understands the importance of and the urgency for not just any job creation opportunity - but the opportunity for creating thousands of good union jobs... And engaging with workers at the earliest stages of the process We see this approach - and triple-bottom-line win opportunities like this one - to be not only necessary at Port Westward, but a model that every community in the state should expect when they are considering economic development proposals. Others have and will talk about the details of this project, its impacts on working people, local communities, and other specifics. We feel that it's also really important to showcase the statewide and regional significance of a project like this To encourage other local jurisdictions and economic development agencies to see the approach that NEXT Renewables has taken as a model And for others to raise their expectations of any and all future developers to ensure we're doing everything we can support not just any developer - but high-road developers We strongly support these land use permits being granted and we're excited to see the local, statewide, and regional impacts this project can and will have for years to come. Thank you again for the opportunity to testify this morning.

Graham Trainor, Oregon AFL-CIO