

## Thank you for protecting Columbia County

Ry Testa <testa.ry@gmail.com>

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To: Jacyn Normine <Jacyn.Normine@columbiacountyor.gov>

Dear Columbia County Council Members,



Thank you for all you do to protect and support this county, its residents and businesses. I know you have likely heard many perspectives on the proposed industrialization of Port Westward by NEXT. I trust that you will make the decision you feel most aligns with your intention to serve the county and community.

As a resident of this county, however, I must say my trust in you would be broken if you allowed NEXT to follow through on proposed developments. From what I see, this corporation's leadership has a track record of unethical practices, and a history of leaving communities with ecological destruction and unpaid bills. I have concern that even if strong legislation was passed to require the NEXT plant to abide by air and water pollution limits, that there would be absolutely no assurance that the company would not choose to simply overlook these laws and pay the fines. The valley that they are proposing development is one of the worst places for such a plant in my opinion, as the water and air quality is already taxed by industrialization. Such development could easily and quickly change the area from being precious habitable fertile farmland and a place of retreat for visitors from Portland to airbnbs and Great Vow Zen Monastery, to which I live at, to being a place of low housing quality and low health standards.

NEXT corporation may try to entice us with promise of jobs, but the reality is, the plant as proposed would likely employ few local residents at wages that would support families. The finances of such large plants are not concerned with our community's wellbeing. They will ultimately be a force that you have to contend with as council members for years to come. Yes, let us bring jobs into this community. But let us make sure that we bring in people that demonstrate at least some level of ethical compass, not a company led by corporate executives who have already shown they know how to skirt the law in their prior developments.

Thank you again for your service to this community.

Rylan Jay Testa