

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
CHELAN COUNTY

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February 19, 2013

Senator Linda Evans Parlette
Post Office Box 40412
Olympia, WA 98504-0412

RE: Letter Supporting Legislation on Latex and Oil Base Paint

Dear Senator Evans Parlette:

We are writing to express Chelan County's support for legislation that authorizes manufacturers, selling paint in Washington, to provide a take-back and recycling program for unwanted latex and oil-based architectural paint. This legislation is supported by the paint manufacturers who have been actively working with local governments on this bill.

Currently, local governments are the primary collectors of unwanted paint in Washington. Architectural paint is the largest and most expensive waste stream for our Moderate Risk Waste (MRW) programs. In 2010, Washington local government programs collected more than 507,000 gallons of paint, which is only 38% of the unwanted paint available for collection, according to estimates by the Department of Ecology. The cost to Washington taxpayers and garbage ratepayers was approximately 3 million dollars.

In Chelan County and the Cities, paint represents 30% of the hazardous waste we manage, costing around \$24,279 annually. There is a concern that we cannot continue funding this disposal in the future. Brenda Harn, Chelan County's Solid Waste Coordinator, has researched the economics and logistics of the proposed bill and has found the savings would be tremendous for Chelan County. Not only costs would be reduced, but convenience for residents to drop off paint will be dramatically improved, while reducing illegal dumping.

Currently, 16 counties do not accept latex paint from residents, which represents 60 percent of the state's population. And those that do collect latex paint are concerned that they cannot continue funding these programs in the future. When managed improperly, unwanted paint poses risks to human health and the environment. Oil-based paint is toxic and flammable. Latex paint, in liquid form, is prohibited from residential garbage programs to prevent spills curbside, in the street, in garbage trucks, and at transfer stations. Moreover, paint is made of materials that could be captured for reuse, recycling, or energy recovery.

Proposed legislation would establish a statewide recycling program, coordinated by paint manufacturers and funded through a small assessment on paint sold in Washington. Residents, as well as painting and general contractors, could return their unwanted paint to convenient collection locations at no cost and the paint would be properly managed.

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This legislation is supported by the American Coatings Association (ACA). They have collaborated with many local and state governments, businesses, and refuse and recycling companies across the country to create this meaningful legislation. In 2009, "model" legislation was passed in Oregon as a demonstration project. Oregon local governments have seen direct cost savings including approximately \$1 million per year in savings for Portland Metro alone. Since 2010, similar stewardship legislation has been enacted in California, Connecticut, and Rhode Island.

Chelan County respectfully urges your support for this legislation that would provide for a convenient and safe return program for unwanted paints. This industry-supported legislation would greatly reduce costs for local governments, increase collection opportunities, increase recycling and recovery, and reduce improper disposal of a hazardous material.

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