

**Written Testimony of Holly Stirnkorb**  
**Contract Director of Government and Community Affairs**  
**Columbia Biogas**  
**Before the House Committee on Energy and Environment**

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February 24, 2015

Chairwoman Pederson, Vice-chairs Johnson and Reardon, and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony today in favor of Senate Bill 324 to repeal the sunset on provisions related to low carbon fuel standards.

My name is Holly Stirnkorb, and I am the Contract Director of Government and Community Affairs for Columbia Biogas. Columbia Biogas, a Portland-based company, is developing a world-class facility to convert food waste into renewable energy in northeast Portland. The project will create jobs and produce renewable natural gas and organic-based fertilizer, all while diverting food waste from landfills and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

The facility will produce biogas in a biologic process using anaerobic digestion in a closed facility. It will process a mix of organic waste generated by commercial, industrial and agricultural businesses, including grocery stores, food distributors, food processors and food establishments in the metro area. The Columbia Biogas facility will generate significant environmental and community benefits including:

- **Job creation:** The facility will create 85 construction and 20 permanent jobs. A job training and recruiting program has been established to maximize local employment opportunities and create economic development in the Cully and surrounding communities.
- **Renewable energy:** Columbia Biogas will locally generate a renewable form of natural gas.
- **Reduce transportation-related carbon emissions:** The renewable natural gas (RNG) produced by Columbia Biogas can be supplied to vehicle operators and used to produce compressed natural gas (CNG) for natural gas vehicles such as waste collection vehicles, buses, taxis and passenger vehicles. According to the EPA, compared to traditional vehicles, vehicles operating on compressed natural gas have reductions in carbon monoxide emissions of 90 to 97 percent, and reductions in carbon dioxide emissions of 25 percent as well as reduction in cancer-causing particulate matter. The renewable natural gas produced by Columbia Biogas has the added

benefit of replacing fossil fuels. Renewable natural gas will benefit the environment even more than fossil fuel natural gas because it represents a decrease in carbon intensity of 63% to 116% compared to gasoline.

In 2009, when the Clean Fuels Program was passed, biogas for transportation was still fledgling, but now it presents a tremendous opportunity and resource. The Clean Fuels Program provides Columbia Biogas an incentive to keep this locally produced source of renewable natural gas in the State of Oregon.

The Clean Fuels Program provides economic development opportunities in Oregon and the region. We strongly encourage you to pass SB 324 and lift the sunset on the Clean Fuels Program so that more investors have the confidence to invest in innovative biogas facilities like Columbia Biogas that will produce clean fuels to meet transportation needs with a lighter environmental footprint.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I would be glad to answer any questions from Committee members.