

March 7, 2021

Re: Supporting House Bill 2488 - Land and Climate Justice Act

Dear Chair Marsh, Vice-Chairs Helm and Smith, and Members of the House Committee on Energy and the Environment,

I am an Oregonian, born and raised in Coos county, and have raised my son in Oregon as well. I graduated from the University of Oregon with a degree in Environmental Studies and have devoted my career to engaging with Oregon landowners and youth around the topic of environmental health. Since 1997 I have worked in natural resource conservation with Soil and Water Conservation Districts, multiple watershed councils and currently contract with Oregon State University. I am writing in support of HB 2488—Equity and Climate in Land Use.

The climate change crisis is the single largest threat to our long-term health and security as individuals, communities and nations. It is and will continue to impact underrepresented communities at disproportionate rates making it easier for industry to ignore, or remain ignorant to, environmental justice issues for the sake of economic growth. The climate crisis was not an urgent issue when Oregon's Land Use Planning Goals were developed. It is time to update the Oregon's Planning Goals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, develop appropriate climate adaptation measures, maximize carbon sequestration, and engage the voices of communities most impacted by the climate crisis.

Land use decisions need to incorporate the real impacts to the environment and communities. Climate, fire risk, invasive species and sea levels are changing, as well as our demographics. Oregon's population is changing rapidly with increases in BIPOC (Black, Indigenous and People of Color) communities as well as wealthy 'climate refugees' buying up and developing properties. Land use planning for more sustainable trends and well-being for all Oregonians requires updated information about the impacts to communities that were previously silent, ignored or were not here in the past.

I strongly support the passage of HB 2488 to update Oregon's Land Use Planning System to address climate change, environmental justice and equity in the planning system in a holistic and integrated manner, which is the only way to prevent climate responses from reinforcing existing inequities. I also urge the members of the House Committee on Energy and the Environment to indicate their support for the recommended budget of \$800,000 to both initiate and finish the adoption of a new Goal 20 for Equity and Climate in this biennium.

Thank you for considering my comments and creating an equitable and climate-smart future for Oregon.

Sincerely,

Bessie Joyce

Eugene, Oregon

