

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

My name is Aimee Okotie-Oyekan and I am the Environmental and Climate Justice Coordinator of the NAACP Eugene Springfield Unit, and a student at the University of Oregon in Environmental Studies and Community and Regional Planning. Today, I am speaking on behalf of myself and I urge the Committee members to support and pass HB 2488 as amended.

In my work and research, I try to understand the connections between people, environment, and inequality. I have come to realize, so much of who we are, who we become, who we are *allowed* to become, is rooted in access to space and place. In Oregon, early settlers sowed seeds of exclusion and violence, and intentionally made it so that, for some groups, such as undocumented migrants, refugees, indigenous peoples, black peoples, their very right to occupy space, to *exist*, is disputed.

Land use, unfortunately, has been used as a tool to perpetuate this exclusion and violence, relegating these communities to the physical and social margins of society, where they face the compounding threats of increased police violence, poverty, crime, pollution, and sub-standard public amenities. That we have not been stomped out carrying the generational weight of is violence is a story of triumph that I will never get tired of telling.

We are now faced with a new threat, the climate crisis, which now is blotting out the same communities on which its proliferation is dependent. Therefore, I urge this Committee to support the passage of HB2488 to update Oregon's Land Use Planning System to address climate change, environmental justice, and equity in the planning system. I also urge this Committee to use the recommended budget of \$800,000 to initiate and finish the adoption of a new Goal 20 for Equity and Climate in this biennium.

I support HB2488 because it presents an opportunity for the great state of Oregon to use its land use system as a vehicle rectify its past, while actively shaping a future where access to clean air and water, healthy food and a stable climate are basic human rights.

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

Sincerely,

Aimee Okotie-Oyekan

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