

Dear Chair and Committee Members,

My name is J'reyesha Brannon, I am the Portland NAACP Branch 1120's Environmental Justice Committee Chair. The Portland NAACP as well as our partners with NAACP Eugene Springfield support House Bill twenty four eighty eight (2488) and urge you to as well. Historically, land use planning has negatively impacted black and brown people. We are still overcoming the impacts of redlining, "blighted homes," displacement under the guise of urban renewal projects, and gentrification. Race and land access have always been tied together when we look at how indigenous people were displaced across this Nation and parceled onto undesirable land, and even in Oregon as we were the only state accepted into the Union with black exclusion laws. Poor land use planning allowed low income housing, where over 40% of the population was black, to be built on a known flood plain with Vanport in the 1940's – when the Columbia river flooded it left thousands displaced and homeless. Oregon's policies have made strides towards responsible land use planning, but explicit consideration for the intersections of climate change and equitable outcomes have not been stated. As we face the ever increasing impacts of climate change, black and brown people are disproportionately affected. This bill ensures that environmental and climate justice are addressed in land use planning decisions, guaranteeing that communities who are most impacted are identified and involved in the decision making process. While leadership attempts to mend the harms of the past, there is often a lack of involvement from those impacted. The simple phrase, nothing for us, without us comes to mind as a need moving forward. This bill explicitly ensures that underrepresented and historically underserved communities are given a seat at the table for land use planning, so that no more will black and brown communities be displaced to the poorest of air and water quality or within zones most likely to be impacted by the consequences of climate change. We urge you to support this bill. Thank you for your time.