

## **Testimony on SCR 17**

### **Senate Committee on Energy and Environment**

**March 18, 2021**

Chair Beyer and Members of the Committee:

My name is Tiffany Monroe I am a farmer in Lane and Benton Counties and my home residence is in Benton County. I serve as president of both Lane County Farm Bureau and Lane Families for Farms and Forests, and I am on the leadership team of the Oregon Black Food Fund. I proudly serve on the Racial Justice Council and Co-Chair the Environmental Equity Committee.

I deeply appreciate the opportunity to submit written testimony on SCR 17 and commend the leadership of our state seeking to establish legislation address the health of BIPOC communities, socio-economic inequalities, as well as reducing air, water, and pollution and exploration of energy alternatives.

I am especially grateful for the Governor's staff for creating the opportunity for me to engage in environmental equity issues for Oregon. I seek to share my perspective as a BIPOC Oregonian, community developer, farmer, business owner and former state agency employee.

It is my understanding that the intent of the SCR 17 is to establish a formal framework for environmental justice principles that will become a foundation for future legislation in Oregon. If implemented, this Joint Resolution will influence law development and impact budgetary priorities for the state. It also my understanding that the Resolution is aimed to drive equity for BIPOC populations, rural communities, essential workers, elderly, and others. In addition, the Resolution will springboard climate legislation, alternative energy, and pollution mitigation in Oregon.

I support this Joint Resolution; however, I do have concerns I would like to address.

After reviewing the Joint Environmental Justice Resolution, the legal authority and power of the framework is unclear. There are multiple environmental justice related bills in session, I am unaware if this framework is designed to specially support the other environmental justice bills in session, or if there functions are independent of one another. When regarding the multiple environmental justice bills under consideration, there are multiple definitions terminologies which can be problematic for the state agencies to follow.

The Joint Resolution also references the Environmental Justice Task Force (EJTF). The EJTF is also the primary component of the SB 286, a bill from the Environment Equity Committee from which I serve as co-chair. If this Resolution and SB 286 were to pass, it is unclear how this Joint Resolution may impact or alter SB 286.

If the Joint Resolution was to pass, to adequately implement the framework in state government, would funding be needed or required?

In order to solidify environmental equity legislation and values in Oregon, it is my request to see additional communication and cohesion between the multiple environmental justice bills and this Joint Resolution so that they can uplift and support one another.

This additional effort between chambers will help state agencies, board and commission to carry out the goals of this Resolution. Having increased clarity of the legal authority of this Resolution and having clear compression of how it aligns with other environmental justice legislation such as SB 286 would extremely helpful. I would also like to see consistency of environmental justice definitions and terminologies between the bills this session.

I support this Joint Resolution; however, I hope these questions and requests will be addressed. I offer my help and resources to reinforce clarity, consistency of all environmental justice legislation, and general understanding of this Resolution. Thank you for the opportunity to comment.