

The international community has been well aware of the dangers of anthropogenic greenhouse gas warming for quite some time. The United Nations created the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)¹ and came into effect on March 21, 1994 with the objective to achieve the “stabilization of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system”. The United States has always been a signature to the treaty since its inception.

The need to act on climate change crosses administrations. The Fourth National Climate Assessment² findings concluded that “Climate change creates new risks and exacerbates existing vulnerabilities in communities across the United States, presenting growing challenges to human health and safety, quality of life, and the rate of economic growth.” In 2019, the Department of Defense released a publication³ detailing the effects of climate change and how the Department can increase the resiliency of their installation in the face of ever-increasing climate related events such as recurrent flooding, drought, wildfire, etc. They determined that two-thirds of the seventy-nine installations reviewed were vulnerable to recurrent flooding alone not including the other climate change related events.

In Oregon, the Fourth Oregon Climate Assessment Report⁴ published by the Oregon Climate Change Research Institute provides a somber review of past records and future projections in the state. It documents the current and future trends of reduced water availability in the summer, accentuating extremes in rainfall, warmer temperatures, and rising ocean levels. Some of the direct effects of climate change such as increasing summer temperatures can, and has produced larger and more destructive wildfires such as the ones we experienced this past summer.

As a member of a citizen advisory committee for Clatsop County Comprehensive Plan Revision, we have grappled with the implications of climate change to our county. We are attempting to use the best local information on the impacts from climate change and natural hazards mitigation plans but they are no substitute for changing the planning goals to address climate justice issues.

The international community and the US Government has recognized the risks to society in general and vulnerable communities in particular from climate change. Scientists at Oregon State University has published clear warnings of impending impacts to humans and the natural resources that so many Oregonians rely upon. The inclusion of climate justice issues in the planning goals will increase the consistency across local government boundaries and provide additional resources and guidance to these governments.

I strongly urge the passage of HB 2488.

Thank you for your time and service to the State.

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¹ UN Treaty Series 1994. United Nations Volume 1771 UNFCCC p. 165 English
<https://treaties.un.org/doc/Publication/UNTS/Volume%201771/v1771.pdf>

² Fourth National Climate Assessment Volume II: Impacts, Risks, and Adaptation in the United States 2018.
https://nca2018.globalchange.gov/downloads/NCA4_2018_FullReport.pdf

³ Report on Effects of a Changing Climate to the Department of Defense 2019.

<https://media.defense.gov/2019/Jan/29/2002084200/-1/-1/1/CLIMATE-CHANGE-REPORT-2019.PDF>

⁴ Mote, P.W., J. Abatzoglou, K.D.Dello, K. Hegewisch, and D.E. Rupp, 2019: Fourth Oregon Climate Assessment Report. Oregon Climate Change Research Institute. occri.net/ocar4.

<https://oregonstate.app.box.com/s/vcb1tdkxvisghzsom44515wpu256ecqf>