



American Planning Association
Oregon Chapter

Creating Great Communities for All

February 8, 2021

Senate Committee On Energy and Environment
Senator Lee Beyer, Chair
Senator Lynn Findley, Vice-Chair
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Testimony from the Oregon Chapter of the American Planning Association in Support of
Senate Bill 286 and Senate Bill 289

Dear Chair Beyer, Vice-Chair Findley, and Members of the Committee:

The Oregon Chapter of the American Planning Association (OAPA) supports the passage of SB 286 and SB 289.

OAPA is an independent, statewide, not-for-profit educational organization of more than 800 planners from across the state who work for cities, counties, special districts, state agencies, tribes, community-based organizations, universities, and private firms that provides leadership in the development of vital communities by advocating excellence in community planning, promoting education and resident empowerment, and providing the tools and support necessary to meet the challenges of growth and change. OAPA supports sustainable communities and works to enhance the quality of life for current and future generations by helping to create and stabilize places that are equitable, healthy, and resilient and provide ongoing economic, environmental, and social benefits.

SB 286 renames the Environmental Justice Task Force to Environmental Justice Council (EJC) and places it within the Department of Environmental Quality. It establishes EJC membership, including those who have expertise in areas with which OAPA membership is engaged such as land use planning and development, sustainability, and enforcement of environmental laws. SB 286 establishes a “cumulative impact analysis” to identify highly impacted communities, vulnerable populations, and environmental health disparities in identified areas and populations. The bill requires natural resource agencies to use cumulative impact analysis when developing administrative rules or agency policies or programs. The Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD) is a natural resources agency and one whose rules, policies, and programs are significantly linked to much of the work performed by our membership.

SB 286 aligns with OAPA’s 2021 Legislative Priorities to:

- **Advance racial equity** — Anti-racism needs to be centered in policy and planning work in Oregon. Deliberate efforts need to be made to advance racial equity and combat systemic racism in the state.
- **Promote resiliency and recovery** — Advancing environmental justice to address inequities and prioritizing vulnerable communities is critical to effective recovery and resiliency strategies.

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- **Confront climate change** — Oregon needs to act now to confront climate change. More needs to be done to mitigate climate change and to help communities adapt and become more resilient to its impacts, while addressing the inequitable impacts of climate change on vulnerable communities. This also means prioritizing planning and assistance for Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) community members and other vulnerable communities, and making their voices a central part of the policy development process.

SB 289 provides that the office of the Governor, in consultation with the Racial Justice Council's Environmental Equity Committee, conduct a study of laws related to the environment, with a focus on potential policy changes that advance environmental equity. Many of the Statewide Planning Goals - the basis upon which local planning, land use, and public facility programs operate - would be better realized by this proposed legislation. Moreover, SB 289 aligns with OAPA's 2021 Legislative Priorities in a similar fashion to SB 286.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony on SB 286 and SB 289. OAPA recommends the Committee vote the bill out with a Do Pass recommendation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Aaron Ray'.

Aaron Ray, AICP, President
Board of Directors

A handwritten signature in purple ink, appearing to read 'Eunice Kim'.

Eunice Kim, AICP, Chair
Legislative and Policy Affairs Committee