

Submitter: Andres Cortes Tellez
On Behalf Of: Rogue Valley Climate Justice Committee
Committee: House Committee On Environment and Natural Resources
Measure: HB4077

February 2nd, 2022

To: House Committee on Environment and Natural Resources
From: Andres Cortes Tellez
Re: Environmental Justice and HB 2077
Email: andrestellez1984@gmail.com

Chair Marsh, Vice-Chair Brock Smith, Vice- Chair Hudson, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of House Bill 4077. My name is Andres Cortes Tellez, I live in Medford, and I am passionate about policy that pushes forward environmental justice for all Oregonians.

I'm writing to support HB 4077 because I know that in order to create and implement a just plan for the future of Oregon's environment, we need region-specific data and dedicated resources to continue bridging connections between state agencies and the public to raise concerns brought by environmental justice communities. Here is a bit about my background and why it makes me passionate about this cause:

Forest Worker: 13 years

In my time as a forest worker, I noticed wind has been increasing through the years which makes it more dangerous for trees or huge branches falling on workers. Heat has drastically changed making the work harder because of dehydration. Fires were increasing in Northern California and Southern Oregon in which I had to help fight fires. There were times that we travelled 2 hours and we were not paid for that time on the road. When a tree fell on me and broke my tibia and heel from my left leg I knew it was time to do another job

Agricultural Worker: 3 years

Heat has increased so much that it has caused people working in the fields to collapse from heat strokes. Pesticide exposure has also been affecting the workers and community close to agricultural fields. During the fire season we still worked even though the air quality was bad due to smoke in the Valley. Co-workers often complained that their lungs hurt but they had no choice but to work to support their families.

Construction Worker: 3 years and currently working in this field

I am happy with this job but the heat is so bad during the summer that I wished I had a job working indoors. The cold winters seem to be longer and much colder, so it

makes working outdoors sometime hard on our hands. The smoke has been so dangerous to our health and has impacted many of our community members. Also the lack of medical insurance they do home remedies which are not as good like going to see a doctor.

Community members need the peace of mind that environmental justice advocates have the resources to make equitable and important decisions about the future of our communities. I urge you to pass HB 4077 to take a small step towards envisioning environmental justice for all in Oregon.

Thank you. Please vote YES on HB 4077.

Sincerely,
Andres Cortes Tellez