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February 5, 2022

Rep. Pam Marsh, Chair and Committee Members  
House Committee on Environment and Natural Resources  
State Capitol  
Salem, OR 97301

Re: HB 4077 (environmental justice)

Dear Chair Marsh and Committee Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in **support of HB 4077**. 1000 Friends of Oregon is a nonprofit, membership organization that works with Oregonians to support livable urban and rural communities; protect family farms, forests and natural areas; and provide transportation and housing choice.

In 2007, the Legislature created the Environmental Justice Task Force (EJTF), an advisory body within the Governor's office. While the EJTF has provided advice on environmental justice and public engagement issues across natural resource agencies, it has done so with no budget and no staff. This decade-plus of experience has demonstrated that to address environmental justice issues with meaning and consistency, it is time for Oregon to formalize this body, provide it stable funding, and direct it to undertake long-needed, fundamental environmental justice activities.

1000 Friends has seen the need for guidance and consistency across all natural resource agencies in how to undertake broad and diverse public engagement in decision-making. We also know that several state agencies are mapping, or seeking data about, vulnerable communities to better carry out their programs. A central place where this work can be coordinated, informed by best practices, reviewed by the public and decision-makers, be readily accessible, and be disseminated is critical to embedding environmental justice into Oregon's all natural resource programs.

HB 4077 will do the following:

- Establish the Environmental Justice Council, and add a youth member to represent future generations.
- Include all natural resource agencies in its purview.
- Direct the Council to oversee creation of a science and health data mapping tool, with socioeconomic information provided through the Department of Environmental Quality and Oregon Health Authority, and working with the Institute of Natural Resources and the DAS Geospatial Enterprise Office (GEO).

- Require the Council to assist in community engagement and outreach to inform a statewide environmental vulnerability assessment tool.

We urge your support for HB 4077. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mary Kyle McCurdy". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Deputy Director