



February 7, 2022

House Committee on Environment and Natural Resources  
900 Court St. NE, Room 453  
Salem, OR 97301

**RE: Letter in Support of HB 4077**

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

Thank you for the opportunity to share the City of Beaverton's support of HB 4077, which makes a critical investment in data collection and mapping to identify Oregon communities harmed by or at risk of suffering environmental injustices. This information is critical to forming policies and programs to benefit communities that have long been marginalized by systemic racism and its accompanying environmental, economic, and public health burdens.

Climate change and environmental degradation don't impact all communities equally. Extreme heat, drought, flooding, and other impacts of our warming planet hit low-income and Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) communities hardest. Studies also show that lower-income and BIPOC communities are exposed to higher levels of air pollution from highways and industry, resulting in significant health disparities based on race, national origin, and income.

There is a critical need to better identify communities who have been systematically overburdened by pollution and experience high levels of environmental and health risks; however, there is no environmental mapping tool specifically designed for the State of Oregon. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) environmental justice mapping tool – EJSCREEN – uses national-level data and consists of a limited number of demographic and environmental indicators. Many environmental indicators, such as drinking water and indoor air quality, are not available with adequate coverage. The EPA encourages supplementing EJSCREEN results with additional information and local knowledge to achieve a more complete picture of a location.

A state-level environmental justice mapping tool like the one called for in HB 4077 would paint a more holistic picture of the intersecting environmental, social, and health impacts experienced by communities across Oregon. Most important, it can help drive and inform community action and public policy.

There is a truism: you treasure what you measure. From the City of Beaverton's perspective, a robust, publicly available mapping tool would help determine whether actions being considered by the city benefit or burden environmental justice communities. It would inform the city budgeting process; improve prioritization of city infrastructure investments, grant expenditures, and real estate acquisitions; ensure that impacted communities are involved in the public decision-making process; and aid in the targeted implementation of Beaverton's *Climate Action Plan* and *Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan*.

Thank you again for the opportunity to share our support of HB 4077 and the need for a more robust environmental justice mapping tool. Please feel welcome to contact me for additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jenny Haruyama". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Jenny Haruyama  
City Manager