

Submitter: Lorri O'Neill

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Environment and Natural Resources

Measure: HB4077

February 2, 2022

To: House Committee On Environment and Natural Resources

From: Lorri O'Neill, Beaverton

Re: Environmental Justice and HB 4077

Email: lorri@uniteoregon.org

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

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of House Bill 4077. My name is Lorri O'Neill, I live in Beaverton and I am passionate about policy that pushes forward environmental justice for all Oregonians.

I'm writing to support HB 4077 because due to the rise of ocean water levels along coastal lands, tribal communities are directly affected by the potential of a tsunami. 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.

As an Indigenous organizer and Native American for Unite Oregon, I am reaching out to Native American communities and to the state level to bring awareness of this climate injustice that affects everyone connected to the 9 federally recognized tribes in Oregon. My sole purpose is to educate the Indigenous community to create value and bring safety to their community which affects them socially, mentally, emotionally and economically. My role is to fulfill the growing demands for environmental justice for all persons' safety and wellbeing.

Why is this policy needed?

The Environmental Justice Task Force (EJTF) lacks adequate resources and the infrastructure necessary to continue their work within environmental justice communities. The EJTF has never had a real budget or designated staff person. Oregon state agencies collect data and information that enhance and influence their decisions in environmental program development, implementation, and funding.

It is difficult to determine the scope of environmental burdens and impacts on Oregon's environmental justice communities and most vulnerable communities because there is no cohesive and well-coordinated initiative to bring information on

environmental justice parameters into one comprehensive and readily accessible structure.

Our state cannot afford to not invest in environmental justice, especially in the midst of countless natural disasters and an ongoing pandemic. An Environmental Justice Task Force and data-mapping will be the first steps towards actualizing this goal. Please invest in environmental justice and support HB 4077.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Lorri O'Neill