

February 9, 2022

To: House Committee On Environment and Natural Resources

From: Mikky Bell, Portland

Re: Environmental Justice and HB 4077

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

My name is Mikky Bell, I live in Portland and attend Portland State University. I am writing today in support of HB 4077 the Environmental Justice for all bill. I am in support of legislation which pushes forward environmental justice for all Oregonians.

I personally care about this legislation for many reasons. Growing up in a rural area of California I have seen environmental impacts on my community first hand. I have also seen the state overlook and under-resource my community because it, at the time, didn't have the data to direct resources equitably. Now California has its own equity data mapping tool called the CalEnviroScreen which it uses in [innumerable](#) ways to advance environmental justice initiatives. A few such uses have been identifying most affected communities to direct funds to for: weatherization and renewable energy projects; public transportation development; investing in affordable housing; and sustainable community planning for areas with high carbon emissions.

Imagine what Oregon could do with our own equity mapping tool!

We need Oregon-specific data and information to give a holistic picture of intersecting environmental, social, and health impacts experienced by communities across Oregon. With this data we will be able to effectively direct funds and develop policy that serves the most vulnerable Oregonians. Which is why we need a **statewide** equity mapping tool.

The Environmental Justice Task Force has never had a real budget or adequate staffing. It is impossible to carry out the burden of ensuring environmental justice principles are upheld by the State of Oregon without the proper funding or resources. That is why it is paramount that we expand the capacity of the task force by converting it to a council and put the full weight of state support behind it. The amount of coordination between state agencies and communities needed to support environmental justice incentives merits real governmental support. **Oregonians don't have time to wait for environmental justice policy, we deserve it now!**

Please invest in environmental justice and support HB 4077. 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 Council and data-mapping will be the first steps towards actualizing this goal.

Sincerely,
Mikky Bell
Portland State University, Portland