

Submitter: James Neu
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Rules
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SJR28

Senator Manning, Senator Prozanski, and State Representative Fragala,

I am writing in support of the right to a healthy environment through the passage of SJR28-1. This amendment to the State Constitution secures that all Oregonians are guaranteed a safe and healthy environment for generations to come.

This amendment would make our state and local governments responsible in protecting Oregonians from human caused environmental harm explicitly stated in our constitution. It also updates our constitution to include toxic pollutants in air, water, soils, and climate. Preventing environmental disasters is much less costly than cleaning up after environmental disaster events. The right to a healthy environment protects every Oregonian from upstream pollutants and makes the polluter pay.

The passage of SJR28-1 will give agencies and their lawyers the power to proactively address threats to our health and safety. The current federal administration is dissolving and stripping the Clean Air Act, Clean Water Act, National Environmental Policy Act, and the Environmental Protection Agency of their authority and staff. The laws they serve are in jeopardy and this amendment will protect Oregonians if the federal government is successful in dismantling these agencies and their federal laws. There has to be checks and balances. The Oregon right to a healthy environment amendment to Oregon's Constitution becomes that check.

There is no fiscal impact for referring SJR28-1 to a future ballot for voters to decide whether this right to a healthy environment amendment is added to the Oregon Bill of Rights. Let the public decide what protections they deserve to a clean and healthy state.

Thank you for your time, your consideration, and for allowing me to submit a comment.

James Neu
Eugene, Or. 97404