

Submitter: Mary Liedel
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Rules
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SJR28

Senate Committee on Rules
State Capitol, Salem, Oregon

RE: Senate Joint Resolution 28

Chair Jama, Vice-Chair Bonham, Committee Members,

I am a life-long Oregonian and spent 40 years as a Certified Nurse Midwife, a life story which has given me deep respect for our State's natural resources and strong commitment to the health of our people. I have lauded Oregon's leadership in the protection of both.

But now we must update and strengthen our laws to continue that legacy. SJR 28 will do that!

The constitutional amendment declares clearly and specifically every Oregonian's Right to a Healthy Environment.

There will be competing forces on the path to adoption of this amendment: individuals and entities who value their own agenda or profit above the basic right of the people. So there will be considerable costs, political and financial, to codify our legal right to health and safety.

But let us be clear about costs. There is ample and mounting scientific evidence that, if we do NOT enshrine our basic rights into our State constitution, the costs incurred will be far, far greater. Science tells us, and we have all witnessed, that the degradation of our environment has led to and will continue to lead to loss of our quality of life, serious impacts on health, and to tragic deaths in ever greater numbers. These are costs with unacceptable human consequences. They also carry profound economic implications for every Oregonian.

This amendment will empower and guide State lawmakers to make strong and wise decisions to uphold the health of our environment and the well being of Oregonians.

I urge you to pass SJR 28 to the floor for legislators to consider referral to the ballot. Allow the people of Oregon to decide for ourselves, our children and our future generations whether we want to strengthen the defense of our basic right to a healthy environment.

Thank you.