

Senators and Representatives,

[The Climate Crisis is here](#), it is real, and it has deadly consequences. Oregon has already faced its deadly consequences:

*[“In three days \[during the 2021 heat dome\], more people died in Multnomah County \[71 people - 96 Oregonians total\] than were killed by COVID-19 in nine days at the height of the pandemic. The heat killed more people than the Vanport Flood \(15 people\), a 2014 landslide that wiped out Oso, Wash. \(41 people\), or the 1980 eruption of Mount St. Helens \(57 people\).”](#)*

Additionally, these effects will continue to increase globally, as global temperatures continue to rise:

*[“The 10 warmest years in the historical record have all occurred in the past decade \(2014-2023\).”](#)*

*[“Between 2030 and 2050, climate change is expected to cause approximately 250,000 additional deaths per year, from undernutrition, malaria, diarrhoea and heat stress alone”](#)*

Humans need to recognize that Earth will go on without us as it has for millions of years. This is becoming an issue of *our* survival - not *Earth's*.

Further, these deadly consequences will not be distributed equally, but will fall most heavily on the communities that are burdened by unsafe or unstable housing, houselessness, pollution, and many other forms of [environmental racism](#), [sexism](#), and injustice. Our actions as humans, particularly those of privilege, have largely been neglectful at best and deliberately harmful at worst to other living things around us: other Humans, Trees, Birds, the Dogs and Cats that live in our homes, Fish, Salamanders, Insects, and on and on (note that my capitalization is intentional).

This opportunity to amend the Oregon State Constitution comes at a time when our Federal government is failing us and putting bedrock environmental protections in serious jeopardy.

SJR 28 “Proposes an amendment to the Oregon Constitution to establish a fundamental right to a clean, safe and healthy environment.” It gives the people a chance to vote on this constitutional amendment - this is the least that can be done: let the people in our democracy speak up and confirm that we want to be able to breathe, drink water, not die of heat exhaustion in our own homes, and experience any amount of joy while being alive.

Creating a legal precedent for Oregon residents to hold polluters (i.e., large corporations) accountable will be necessary to give us any sort of power as grassroots individuals and organizations facing billionaires and massive corporations.

Now is the time. Tomorrow does not wait for us.

Tyler Gilmore

he/him

Volunteer Co-Team Lead, 350PDX Forest Defense Team