

Submitter: Anna Kaufman
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Rules
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SJR28

Chair Jama, Vice-Chair Bonham, and Committee Members,

I strongly support Senate Joint Resolution 28 to amend the Oregon Constitution and establish a fundamental right to a clean, safe, and healthy environment.

As a resident of the North Coast, I have witnessed the rapid liquidation of our mature forestland (both public and private) for years now. In my time working with the burgeoning citizen group North Coast Communities for Watershed Protection (NCCWP), I have become increasingly aware of the direct connection between our mature forest ecosystem and the health of our climate, as well as our drinking water resources.

NCCWP was founded in 2012 in Rockaway Beach in response to the mass clearcutting and aerial pesticide spraying of their primary source of surface drinking water, the Jetty Creek Watershed. This is a drinking watershed that is owned by multiple private timber companies, and that has been 90% clearcut since 2000. Not only has the city faced issues of water quality because of pesticide application and sediment runoff caused by clearcutting, but also issues of water quantity because of lack of forest cover within the watershed. What's more, both the issues of water quality and quantity have left citizens with high water bills to cover the costs of an upgraded water sanitation system and to accommodate the low summer flows. Sadly, Rockaway Beach is just one of many communities up and down the coast experiencing threats to their drinking water because of the timber industry's disgraceful practices. With the acceleration of climate change, availability of clean and abundant drinking water will only become more threatened.

I urge you to support SJR28. Please help protect Oregon citizens and future generations from the gross pollution caused by major industry in the State. In this era of climate crisis, we must work together to support one another, and to ensure we can maintain access to a safe, healthy environment for all. This includes access to clean, abundant drinking water resources for human and non-human communities alike.

Thank you,

Anna Kaufman