

Submitter: Elizabeth Fox
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Rules
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SJR28

When I transferred from Iowa State to OSU in 1978, I thought I was moving to an environmentally friendly state, the first in the nation with a bottle bill! After all, I grew up 2 blocks from the heavily polluted Mississippi. Imagine my dismay when I walked downtown to watch the OSU crew team and saw how polluted the Willamette River was then: it was a garbage dump and a sewer, combined.

Over time I was thrilled to see the river cleaned up, the greenway developed and the state make tremendous improvements. Sadly, Oregon rivers are still among the most polluted in the US.

Over the years, I have had a bunch of careers, two of them directly involved with Oregon's environment: public health and land use planning. As a state registered sanitarian, I had first hand evidence of what happens with year-round campgrounds in active floodplains, and saw the Siletz River loaded with human waste, floating RV's and debris.

Alternatively, as a land-use planner, I also saw where positive, environmentally conscious development was halted because small-minded community members didn't like the woman who proposed it. NIMBY can keep all sorts of good things from happening, too.

Finally, as a mother to two beautiful citizens of this state, I want to have them see our state waterways improve and have a great place to live with their own families. I'd like for them to inherit our farm, knowing that the laws of this state will help protect it from man-made environmental harm.

The Right to a Healthy Environment can offer so many great benefits to our state and it will help clarify decisions and use "valid, independent, peer-reviewed scientific data" (from OR GOP Platform, 6.12) to inform decisions. Additionally, it's my understanding that the measure will have no fiscal impact as a legislative referral to citizens.

It has worked well, without frivolous lawsuits, in other states and I truly support this measure for the future of our state. It is far less costly to prevent environmental harm than to clean it up afterwards

Thank you for your consideration and all you do to insure a healthy future for our state.