

Submitter: Virginia Scott
On Behalf Of: Current and Future Generations
Committee: Senate Committee On Rules
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SJR28

From: Virginia Scott
Date: March 27, 2025
Re: SJR 28 – Fundamental Right to Healthy Environment – Support

Dear Chair Senator Jama, Vice-Chair Senator Bonham and members of the Committee:

I am writing to urge your support for SJR 28, the Right to a Healthy Environment.

Clear air, water, and earth are essential to a healthy environment for animals, including humans, plants and the climate. If protecting the air, water and land is not enough of an incentive for support of a Right to a Healthy Environment in and of itself, I ask you to consider the economics of not enacting the Right to a Healthy Environment. The lack of a healthy environment, for example from smoke particles, PFAS carried in the methane plums from landfills, vehicle exhaust, toxins in water, excessive heat, etc. all lead to lower health and health outcomes, which in turn puts a strain on our medical care costs, our children's ability to learn and their future productivity, our worker productivity, etc. Excessively hot days put a strain on crops, crop productivity, farm workers, etc. Climate change from an unhealthy environment leads to unusual weather events, like tornadoes, flooding, cold and ice events, and wind and fire events that all damage, crops, forest lands, the air, human health, our already limited housing, etc. All of the above affects the ability for us to sell our products to fellow Oregonians and to export these products abroad, they affect tourism dollars, and they affect higher dollar amounts required to address the after effects of these events and illnesses created or exacerbated by them.

I also support the wording amendment as suggested by the League of Women Voters in their testimony letter:

"The League supports this constitutional amendment referral concept with comments. The League is concerned with the specific wording. It appears to be written from a courtroom perspective. To address voter understanding and reduce confusion we suggest simple wording, such as that used in the constitutions of other states (e.g. State of Montana) that have had favorable environmental constitutional rulings."

A healthy environment is necessary for the well-being of current and future Oregonians, the economic well-being of the state, and for the world, therefore I urge you to support SJR 28.

Sincerely,
Virginia Scott