

Submitter: Scott Shurtleff

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Rules

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SJR28

Chair Jama, Vice Chair Bonham, and Members of the Senate Committee on Rules,

I thank you for holding the public hearing for SJR 28 this past Wednesday. I further thank you for interleaving testimony on both sides.

One of your responsibilities as Oregon's legislative body is to create a political environment where power is balanced. Our current jurisprudence is NOT balanced. Currently the balance of power strongly favors the rights of commerce. Corporations and other entities with a lot of resources have the most power. Individual people, and even groups of people, hold far less power.

Take the opportunity presented by SJR 28 to take a step towards fixing this imbalance. SJR 28 is a step towards restoring a balance of power by asserting people's right to a healthy environment. SJR 28 will empower state agencies to protect this right in their policy and regulatory decisions. And when it comes to it, SJR 28 gives groups of people who have a legitimate case the power to seek relief through the courts.

In addition, older generations have more power in government. At the hearing, I witnessed many young people speaking in support of SJR 28. There was not even one young person testifying in opposition. This amendment will provide legal standing for young people like Miko, who are the future of the State of Oregon, to protect their right to a livable environment. I can think of no right more important than one that provides for the wellbeing of future generations of Oregonians.

SJR 28 is a necessary step to give the people of our state more power in our governance. SJR 28 is a step to addressing a power imbalance that favors corporations and economic activity at the cost of human wellbeing. Please pass SJR 28 out of your committee with a 'do pass' recommendation.

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