



March 30, 2021

Chair Marsh, Vice-Chair Helm, Vice-Chair Brock-Smith, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Akashdeep Singh and I am the Policy and Advocacy Manager at OPAL Environmental Justice Oregon. It is my honor and pleasure to write in support of HB 2488.

Oregonians are facing numerous environmental crises right here at home. The wildfires of last summer and autumn unleashed catastrophic destruction and blanketed our communities in a blanket of harmful burnt orange smoke - harm augmenting the risks of a respiratory pandemic. The ice storm that took away power from thousands of communities just earlier this year. The disparate pollution that is devastating generations of underrepresented Oregonian families and has been doing so for decades.

Climate change impacts every aspect of our lives and lived environments. Adapting to and addressing its numerous consequences requires a multifaceted, holistic approach and this is why HB 2488 is so important. In directing the Land Conservation and Development Commission to adopt a new planning goal centering equity and environmental justice, HB 2488 lays out specific steps that can help Oregon achieve its climate goals by adopting important equity principles.

The application of these planning goals in local land use decisions, development of a new statewide land use advisory committee, identification of disparate health risks to environmental justice communities, and requirement of equal and fair notice to impacted and tribal communities are necessary steps for Oregon to face our climate future.

Oregon has 19 statewide land use planning goals but does not explicitly consider climate change in any of them. Goal 20 would change that and ensure that climate, equity, and environmental justice are addressed in our statewide land use planning decisions. Oregon's Indigenous governments and tribal communities, Black, Latinx, and PoC Oregonians, low-income Oregonians, and rural Oregonians have borne the brunt of environmental hazards and pollution - consequences of land use decisions that have not taken equity into consideration.

I also urge the members of this committee to indicate their support for the recommended budget of \$800,000 to both initiate and finish the adoption of Goal 20 within this biennium. A recommendation from this committee for additional funding allocations would be incredibly helpful in order to provide underserved communities in rural Oregon and sparsely populated areas the necessary technical assistance they require to implement these goals.

HB 2488 is a step towards making sure that Oregon is prepared to face the challenges of a climate challenged century and create a better future for Oregonians.

Thank you for this opportunity.

Sincerely,

Akashdeep Singh

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