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Dear Chair Marsh, Vice-Chairs Helm and Smith, and Members of the House Committee on Energy and the Environment,

It is important that we lose no more time in making reforms to our statewide land use planning goals. Our state is confronting climate change and systemic racism, and the two are entwined. That is why I urge you to support HB 2488. Although Oregon's land use planning system has long been a model for responsible and deliberate land use planning, it fails to explicitly consider climate change within any of the 19 statewide land use planning goals. A single new statewide land use planning goal—Goal 20—would ensure that climate, equity and environmental justice are addressed in our statewide land use planning decisions.

The climate crisis is both a product of and exacerbates existing racial, social and socioeconomic inequities. People of color are not served by the current planning system, and the impacts of environmental problems fall disproportionately on their communities.

I therefore strongly support the passage of HB 2488 to update Oregon's Land Use Planning System, and also the recommended budget of $800,000 to both initiate and finish the adoption of a new Goal 20 for Equity and Climate in this biennium. There is positive forward movement in securing funding in that the Department of Land Conservation and Development included $800,000 in Package 90 for Equity Initiatives as part of their proposed agency budget (see SB 5530). In addition, in order to provide adequate technical assistance to underserved rural communities and smaller cities and counties, a recommendation from the House Energy and Environment Committee for additional funding allocations would be appreciated.

In short, HB 2488 will guarantee climate and equity-responsive land use planning by Oregon's local governments. Oregon cannot afford not to be prepared for the unique challenges of this century.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Emily Heilbrun