



March 8, 2021

To: Representative Pam Marsh, Chair, House Committee on Energy and Environment
Members, House Committee on Energy and Environment
From: Max Greene, Regulatory & Policy Director, Renewable Northwest
Re: **Support for HB 2488**

Dear Chair Marsh and Members of the Committee,

Renewable Northwest is a regional, non-profit renewable energy advocacy organization based in Oregon, dedicated to decarbonizing the region by accelerating the transition to renewable electricity. Our members are a combination of renewable energy businesses and environmental and consumer groups. **Renewable Northwest supports HB 2488, which would create a new Land Use Goal dedicated to climate change and environmental justice.**

Oregon's land use system is based on formally adopted Statewide Land Use Planning Goals that do not reflect the state's objectives and values for climate, energy, and environmental justice. Despite state policies such as the Renewable Portfolio Standard that seek to decarbonize our electricity sector and bring more clean energy jobs to Oregon, none of Oregon's nineteen Land Use Goals acknowledges climate change mitigation as a factor in making land use decisions. Neither do the Goals acknowledge necessary approaches to climate mitigation such as renewable energy development as beneficial uses of land.

Climate experts uniformly recognize that effective climate mitigation will require an aggressive transition to renewable energy, and it is vitally important that environmental justice is a central component of this transition. With the possibility of a 100% clean energy policy passing this session that may include standards for community renewables—not to mention the pressing threat of climate change—it is particularly important that Oregon's land use goals be updated as soon as possible to reflect the state's climate, energy, and environmental justice goals and values.

HB 2488 would take a major step in the right direction by ensuring that climate change mitigation, adaptation, and environmental justice are factors in land use planning and decision-making through a new Goal 20. We would like to express our wish that the new Goal 20 explicitly identify renewable energy as a component of climate change mitigation as well, as the absence of renewable energy in Oregon's land use goals inadvertently creates barriers both to renewable development and to community renewable access. We are continuing conversations with other stakeholders in the hope of identifying a path to including renewable energy in the bill, but regardless offer our strong support for HB 2488.

Sincerely,

Max Greene

Regulatory & Policy Director
Renewable Northwest