

Dear Chair Power, Vice-Chairs Bonham and Sollman, and Members of the House Energy & Environment Committee,

We need reforms to our statewide land use planning goals. If we hope to rise to the challenges of continued climate chaos and systemic environmental racism, then we need a land use planning system capable to do so. Support HB 2488—Equity and Climate in Land Use, to ensure that Oregon's land use planning system includes a comprehensive and rounded approach to address climate change mitigation and adaptation, equity, hazard risk reduction and environmental justice.

Oregon's land use planning system has long been a model for responsible and deliberate land use planning. However, 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. Local governments have been and are currently making critical decisions regarding comprehensive plans, urban growth boundaries, and urban and rural reserves without sufficient consideration (if any) of either the projected climate impacts of land use decisions within their jurisdiction or whether these decisions will help achieve Oregon's greenhouse gas emission reduction goals.

As a resident of Salem, I have experienced first hand the impacts of algae blooms contaminating our only drinking water source, wild fires, floods, wind and ice storms threatening our lives, livelihoods and ecosystems -- just within the last few years. I know these symptoms of climate change will only worsen, and the city is not adequately addressing the escalating climate chaos or the essential reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in its current land use planning, despite its recent adoption of a climate action plan.

We know that the climate crisis did not emerge out of a vacuum: it is both a product of and exacerbates existing racial, social and socioeconomic inequities. Oregon's Native American governments and tribal communities, Black, Latinx and other people of color, as well as low income and under-resourced rural communities, have told us time and again that our current planning system simply does not serve them. Consultation and inclusion in land use decision-making processes is often inadequate and insufficient in scope. Pollution and environmental risks and hazards are too often situated in the communities that can least afford and are least equipped to cope, as can be seen in the siting of one of Oregon's top greenhouse gas emitters, the Marion Covanta incinerator.

I strongly support the passage of HB 2488 to update Oregon's Land Use Planning System to address climate change, environmental justice and equity in the planning system in a holistic and integrated manner, which is the only way to prevent climate responses from reinforcing existing inequities. I also urge the House Energy and Environment Committee to indicate their support for 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 under-served rural communities and smaller cities and counties, a recommendation from the House Energy and Environment Committee for additional funding allocations would be appreciated.

HB 2488 will guarantee climate and equity-responsive land use planning by Oregon's local governments and ensure that Oregon is prepared for the unique challenges of this decade.

On behalf of my grandchildren, thank you for considering my comments and creating an equitable and climate-smart future for Oregon.

Sincerely,  
Kim Davis