

HB 2488 Testimony

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

Thank you for listening and taking into consideration our input on the critical legislation before you.

As Vice President of the Board at Beyond Toxics, and a member of the Racial Justice and Equity Committee at 350Eugene, I write to urge you to pass HB 2488 – Equity and Climate in Land Use, and urge the members of 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.

I submit my testimony knowing that I represent the aspirations of many of my fellow constituents who care deeply about present and future generations of all Oregonians.

Beyond Toxics works statewide to support the leadership of low-income and rural communities, communities of color and tribal organizations, who have been unfairly burdened with the harmful impacts from land-use, industrial, forest, agricultural, and energy policies that concentrate toxins in air, land, and water in their communities. The impacts include higher rates of chronic illness, infant mortality and birth defects, reduced life expectancy, mental and emotional harm, and so much more.

Leadership from communities most impacted by the effects of environmental toxins and climate change is critical if we are to craft solutions that work for everyone. They are the ones best equipped not only to understand the problem, but to understand what is required to make solutions that will truly work for all of us. And fortunately, our state is blessed with a vital network of powerfully capable leaders from impacted communities.

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.

We are in a time of rapid change. Larger, more intense wildfires, severe winter storms, floods, drought, even the coronavirus pandemic, are all traceable to the collapse of our environment and the collapse of what used to be a stable climate. Fortunately, we the people are also changing. More of us are understanding the connection between the climate and environment, and our longstanding exploitation and mistreatment of people on the front lines – essential workers, low income and communities of color, and indigenous communities.

Now is the right time to make long-needed reforms to our statewide land use and planning goals, in order to meet our 21st Century Challenges with the policies and leadership that is needed.

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 century.

Thank you for taking these comments to heart.

Sincerely,

Cameron Hubbe, Eugene, OR