



March 8, 2021

House Energy and Environment Committee
900 Court Street NE, Room 453,
Salem, OR 97301

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RE: HB 2488 and HB 2814 before the 2021 Oregon legislature

Chair Power, Vice Chair Bonham and Sollman, and Members of the House Energy and Environment Committee:

My name is Ted Labbe and I am Executive Director of the Urban Greenspaces Institute. I am writing in support of HB 2488 – Equity and Climate in Land Use. I am also in favor of HB 2814.

The Urban Greenspaces Institute works across the Portland metropolitan region with local governments on green infrastructure and climate policies. We know first-hand what the challenges are. Oregon has been heralded as a model for responsible land use planning. But I can tell you from my experience that climate change and equity are mere after thoughts and get short shrift under our present system.

The transportation, development, and industries in and around our cities represent around 70% of carbon emissions at present. We cannot address the challenge of climate change without new proactive measures. We need a new goal for climate change and equity. It hasn't worked to squeeze consideration of climate change and equity into the other goals.

Goal 1 addresses public participation in a generic way. And it privileges white-dominant, property-owning, and monied interests who know how to mobilize folks to show up at hearings and get noisy. I know. I have seen this system in action.

Goals 3 to 7 protect farms, forestlands, natural resources, air and water, respectively. Goals 15 to 19 bring a special focus to our waterways and shorelands. The focus is on protecting farm and forestland productivity and setting back development from sensitive lands or natural hazards. All good thing to do. But there is no consideration for protecting and boosting opportunities for carbon sequestration, or for the urgent need to spur climate adaptation.

Goals 9, 10, 11, and 12 address economic development, housing, public utilities, and transportation. Goals 13 and 13 address energy conservation and urbanization. To keep things orderly and tidy, with energy efficient and compact

In Livable Cities is Preservation of the Wild

cities. These are all great things to do. Worthy goals. But in the face of the climate crisis, orderly and tidy are not enough. Not by a long shot.

Our climate is shifting quickly, as the fires of last year attest. Oregon's population is rapidly diversifying. People of color, tenants, the Tribes, and others have been marginalized by Oregon's land use system and live on the frontlines of the climate change impacts. We need a new land use goal and to amend our existing goals to address these changes and rebalance our land use planning.

I am a fifth-generation Oregonian. My family and fortunes have benefited greatly from Oregon's development as a State. In a former job, I worked for an Indian Tribe in Washington State helping them with natural resources management.

I also read history, and my heart aches over the ugly history of mistreatment by Whites of Oregon's Tribes. War, removal, termination, and even restoration have taken their toll on Oregon Tribes. In my lifetime, the Siletz Tribe was forced to cede additional Treaty rights in order to get their federal recognition restored. This concession was forced on them not by Republican's Hatfield or Packwood, but by a so-called liberal Democrat, Les Aucoin – who acted at the behest of sportfishing and hunting interests to limit the Tribe's Treaty-protected fishing and hunting rights.¹

This happened in 1980 when I was 11 years old. I caught my first wild steelhead when I was nine years old, and this formidable event shaped who I am today. I went on to pursue a career in conservation. In no small way, I have benefitted from this history of colonization and abuse.

This abuse, this injustice is ongoing. It isn't something that happened in the past. We can't paper it over and continue to pat ourselves on our backs as being the paragons of wise land use planning, as the model for others to follow.

Now is the time to *begin* to redress these errors of the past. HB 2488 and HB 2814 won't remedy all of this injustice but they are a start. Please support these bills. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Ted Labbe
503-758-9562

¹ Wilkinson, Charles. 2010. *The People are Dancing Again: The History of the Siletz Tribe of Western Oregon*. Seattle: University of Washington Press. Pages 329-31.