

March 17, 2021,

Chair Beyer, Vice Chair Findley and members of the Senate Energy and Environment Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SCR 17: An Environmental Justice Framework for Oregon. As a lifelong Oregonian and a graduate of the biology program at Oregon State University, I care deeply about our environment. On behalf of myself, my community, and the many species of living beings with which we share space I urge you to support SCR 17.

Oregon's State Legislature needs to do much more to address the urgent issues of environmental and climate justice in a timely fashion. SCR 17 provides a statement of principles that, if passed, will help guide the Oregon's actions as we navigate an uncertain future.

It is essential that we prioritize equity and justice in our decision making, and actively prioritize the voices of those who are and will continue to be most affected by the effects of climate change, including people who are Black, Native American, low-income, young, Queer, and/or Trans. The resolution outlined in SCR 17 recognizes that the lack of services and disproportionate exposure to environmental hazards faced by many communities in Oregon is a product of exclusion from and unequal access to decision-making processes, and would help align equity goals throughout the legislative and administrative branches of government, helping to build a just, equitable, and resilient future for all Oregonians.

At the core of an equitable and sustainable society is environmental justice -- without clean air and water, without energy and goods that are produced without harming us, without stable climate and weather, our communities are cast into chaos. Oregon needs a robust set of sacred principles that will help ensure that all Oregonians will have their essential needs met.

I urge you to vote yes on SCR 17. As Oregon takes on the monumental challenge of redressing the issues related to climate change the Legislature should clearly indicate that the needs of historically and disproportionately impacted communities will be prioritized.

We must improve the public health and well-being of all communities while directly tackling the climate crisis and environmental injustice.

Sincerely,

Juliana Brown
Gresham, Oregon