

3/18/21

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

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of SCR 17: An Environmental Justice Framework for Oregon. I urge you to support SCR 17.

Our State Legislature has much work to do to address the urgent issues of environmental and climate justice in a timely fashion. SCR 17 is a valuable first step to a statement of principles to move forward with a future focused on environmental justice action.

Climate disruption will take everyone to solve, and will effect everyone. What we've seen is that climate change events have and will continue to effect people with lower incomes and those who have been put at economic disadvantage from decades of discriminatory laws and practices in a more challenging way.

It is time to begin to put things right, finally. This resolution creates the necessary foundation for prioritizing those communities who have been left out of policy-making decisions that ultimately will impact them. At this crucial time, we need a wide variety of perspectives and experience at the table to create wise, fair, and viable decisions.

Historically marginalized community members bring a unique and important perspective to decision-making entities. Living with limited resources takes resilience, creativity, and fortitude, traits that will be important for climate resilience going forward.

SCR 17 is a valuable tool in aligning equity goals throughout both legislative and administrative branches of our government.

We are fast approaching the limits to our past way of perceiving the world and how we treat the earth, water, and air that sustain us. We obviously need a new way of thinking, one that has been the basis of native perspective throughout time.

I urge you to vote yes on SCR 17. It is time to acknowledge our past shortcomings and to honor the voices of those who have been left out of land policy formation in the past.

This is a just path forward and also one that is likely to be the most successful as we learn from those who have struggled just to survive.

Sincerely,
Linda Kelley
350 Eugene volunteer