

March 26, 2021

Dear Chairman Marsh, Vice-Chair Brock Smith, Vice-Chair Helm, and members of the Committee,

I'm writing in support of HB 2488. Although I'm now retired, I spent much of my career in K-12 schools and then at the college- and university-level educating young people and then their future teachers about the need to transform our institutions in ways that foster both environmental sustainability and social justice.

This piece of legislation will go a long way to ensure that as communities around Oregon grapple with the consequences of climate change, they will do so in ways that address the concerns and needs of citizens who because of their race or skin color have been too often excluded from the decision-making process. It will also ensure that local land use decisions will take into account the impact climate change is likely to have on precipitation levels, temperature, sea level rise, slope stability, and vegetation changes.

After having served on advisory boards and committees in West Linn, I'm aware of the role state-mandated goals can play in shaping local conversations and actions. Adding a new Goal 20 that explicitly addresses both equity and climate change will provide a structure that could hopefully guide professional planners and citizens around the state to make land use decisions capable of adapting to and mitigating the effects of climatic disruptions associated with atmospheric carbon in a manner that does not further harm already disadvantaged populations.

I urge you to support HB 2488 and bring it to the floor of the House for discussion and a vote.

Sincerely yours,

Gregory A Smith, PhD