

Chair Marsh, Vic-Chair Brock Smith, Vice Chair Helm, and Members of the Committee: I am a small woodland owner in the rural area of east Multnomah County. I strongly support HB 2488. Currently there is no climate justice planning goal in Oregon's statewide land use planning process. Without such a goal, local governments are free to continue to ignore the impact of climate change when making planning and land use decisions. While Oregon's land use planning system has been a model for responsible and deliberate land use planning since the 1970's, it has not been updated in 50 years. It inadequately engages Oregon's underserved communities and fails to explicitly address climate change. This update is long overdue.

Black, Native American, Indigenous, People of Color, immigrant, rural, and low-income communities have been underserved by and excluded from land use decision-making processes for far too long. The stakes are high and inaction in the face of the climate crisis spells higher risk of harm for frontline communities who bear the brunt of climate impacts, such as precipitation changes that lead to greater rainfall and the potential for flooding; temperature changes that lead to agricultural stress, increase the risk of drought, and set the stage for more devastating wildfires; and population growth due to climate migration.

Climate change mitigation needs to be addressed in every sector of Oregon's government and economy. This bill will ensure that local government comprehensive land use plans meet high statewide standards and address the reality of climate change that is already impacting every community in the state.