

Submitter: Rosa Colquitt

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources

Measure: SB530

Rosa Colquitt, PhD

Member, Environmental Caucus, Democratic Party of Oregon

Chair, Black Caucus, Democratic Party of Oregon

Senate Committee on Natural Resources

Re: Testimony on SB 530 – Establishes state policy regarding natural climate solutions

Dear Chair Senator Golden, Vice Chair Senator Girod, and committee members, Senator Prozanski, Senator Smith, Senator Taylor

My name is Dr. Rosa Colquitt. I am writing in full support of SB 530.

Climate solutions sometimes fail to leverage the experience and wisdom of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color, and stop short of repairing the legacy of health, economic, and quality of life inequity exacerbated by the climate crisis. As an advocate for race and environmental climate justice, I support the natural climate solutions in this legislation because it offers simple, proven solutions to ensure equitable environmental outcomes.

SB 530 will provide additional resources for historically marginalized communities already experiencing the impacts of climate change firsthand. Very importantly, according to the Environmental Protection Agency, the effects of climate change disproportionately fall on "under-served communities who are least able to prepare for, and recover from drought, heat waves, poor air quality, flooding, and other impacts." Providing additional resources for these communities should be a top priority for state legislators.

In Oregon, natural climate solutions can provide simple, low-cost opportunities for meeting an extensive list of needs such as: 1) reducing heat island effects; 2) improving air quality; 3) improving flood control; 4) improving soil health and productivity; and 5) improving drought and resilience response.

With respect to leveraging federal resources, SB 530 will also invest in a comprehensive Oregon natural and working lands inventory and study opportunities for workforce development and training. The latter is likely to have direct positive impacts on many marginalized and low-income Oregon citizens, as well as communities of color overall.

Thank you for taking the time to consider my written testimony.