

SAMPLE TESTIMONY

SCR 17: An Environmental Justice Framework for Oregon



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- 1. Why this is important:** By submitting testimony to Oregon lawmakers, we can show that there is broad support for taking action to create a framework of shared values that lays the path for future policies and practices that are based on the right to ethical, balanced, healthy, and responsible uses of land, water and renewable resources for future Oregonians. This helps lawmakers feel confident in voting to advance our bills and take action. Your personal story is powerful in helping to sway opinion in favor of strong environmental justice and climate policy.
- 2. How to submit testimony:** Go to <https://olis.oregonlegislature.gov/liz/2021R1/Testimony/HEE> and click the button next to Senate Concurrent Resolution 17. Then, enter your contact information and follow the instructions for submitting testimony either as copy/pasted text or as a PDF file. The deadline for submitting testimony online is 24 hours after the public hearing for SCR 17 begins (in this case, the deadline is 1:00 p.m. Thursday, May 6th).
- 3. Tune in to watch the public hearing:** Go to <https://olis.oregonlegislature.gov/liz/2021R1/Measures/Overview/SCR17> and click on the arrow next to Scheduled Events. Navigate to the hearing scheduled for 1:00 p.m. on Wednesday, May 5th. There will be a button shaped like a play button or movie camera next to the date of the committee meeting -- click on this to view the livestream of the hearing.

*You can copy and paste to begin filling out this sample testimony for your own entry!
Make sure to personalize your testimony with what is important to you.*

SAMPLE TESTIMONY TEMPLATE:

[Organizational Logo]

[Date]

Chair Marsh, Vice Chairs Helm and Brock Smith and members of the House Energy and Environment Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to **[testify / submit testimony]** in support of SCR 17: An Environmental Justice Framework for Oregon. **[Write a little bit about yourself, where you live, a little about what occupies your time, and what connects you to your community and environmental justice.]** I urge you to support SCR 17.

[I / We] acknowledge that our State Legislature needs to do much more to address the urgent issues of environmental and climate justice in a timely fashion. A first step is agreeing to a statement of principles that set the bar for future action. The proposed resolution follows a valuable tradition of passing resolutions at times we must take first steps to right wrongs. Good examples of resolutions that demonstrate the impact that follows the adoption of a resolution include the UN Declaration on Human Rights and the UN Resolution on Women, Peace and Security.

Why is SCR 17 important to you or your organization? **[Write a couple sentences here. You can highlight some of the points below.]**

Why this resolution is important:

- This resolution is a conversation starter that we hope will lead to the investments our communities need to be resilient and will benefit future generations to come.
- Oregonians need a shared statement of conviction that lays the foundation for future policy to address the needs of our frontline communities who are Black, Native American, Indigenous and People of Color communities, essential workers, youth, low-income people and those who are most vulnerable in rural and urban communities.
- This resolution recognizes that the lack of services and essential infrastructure 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.
- SCR 17 would help align the equity goals throughout the legislative and administrative branches of government to build a just, equitable, and resilient future for all Oregonians.

Why we need a resolution:

- Events such as the September 2020 wildfires disproportionately impacted historically disadvantaged and underrepresented communities in many rural areas of our state. In recognition of climate trends such as fire, flood and energy system overloads, SCR 17 draws our attention to the need to repair communities to “build back better.”
 - SCR 17 uplifts the expectation that Oregon will make reparative investments in impacted communities and direct state resources to ensure that policies and processes are focused on building systems for healthy food, renewable energy infrastructure and good jobs with a family-sustaining wage, including workforce services and skills training programs.
- Communities that have been harmed by unjust and discriminatory siting of pollution, lack of access to public infrastructure, and exposure to other environmental hazards, are now finding themselves bearing the brunt of the climate crisis.
 - SCR 17 states that Oregon will “address environmental pollution on the basis of the right of all people to clean air and protection from climate hazards and sustainable preservation of ecological integrity.”
- “Water is life,” and as we have seen with the impacts of climate change, water is one of our most basic needs. Oregon must invest in protecting water for community drinking water, wildlife survival and agricultural needs.
 - SCR 17 calls out for Oregon state leaders to acknowledge that “Water is Life,” and to make investments in safe and affordable drinking water, watershed protection and water infrastructure to safeguard the water on which we currently depend.

What this resolution will accomplish:

- 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. A framework of shared principles helps us achieve equity and sustainability.
- This resolution acknowledges that Oregon needs to move towards a regenerative economy that prioritizes community health protection, respects traditional ecological knowledge, and ensures the full and fair participation of Black, Native American, Indigenous and People of Color communities.
- This resolution includes all who have been left behind in environmental planning and decision-making, including essential workers, youth, low-income people and those who are most vulnerable in rural and urban communities.

[I / we] urge you to vote yes on SCR 17. As Oregon takes on the monumental challenge of redressing these impacts, there should be a clear indication from the Legislature that the needs of historically and disproportionately impacted communities will be centered every step of the way. We must improve the public health and well-being of all communities while directly tackling the climate crisis and environmental injustice.

Sincerely,

Name

Position title / Role

Organization