



American Planning Association  
**Oregon Chapter**

*Creating Great Communities for All*

February 24, 2022

House Speaker Day Rayfield  
Senate President Peter Courtney

RE: February 22 Press Release: *\$100 Million Climate Resilience Budget Aims to Tackle Drought, Extreme Weather, Infrastructure Needs*

Dear House Speaker Rayfield and Senate President Courtney:

The Oregon Chapter of the American Planning Association (OAPA) was pleased to read about and supports the proposed \$100 million Climate Resilience Budget as described in the February 22 press release from your offices. OAPA is a nonprofit membership organization of over 800 planners that works to create sustainable and vibrant Oregon communities through professional development; advocacy for sound planning; providing resources to meet the challenges of growth and change; and embracing and promoting diversity, inclusion and equity.

This budget action will address a key OAPA legislative priority to **promote equitable resiliency and recovery**. Oregon is facing unprecedented challenges – including the coronavirus pandemic, economic crisis, wildfires, and extreme weather events such as extreme heat – that require immediate and ongoing action to help communities prepare, recover, and rebuild. There is an increased urgency to ensure all Oregon’s communities can withstand and bounce back from natural hazards and other disasters, with an emphasis on minimizing vulnerability.

OAPA believes that it is critical that this budget:

- Promote equitable integrated strategies at the state and local level to reduce risk and improve the ability of all individuals, communities, economic systems, and the natural and built environments to withstand, recover from, and adapt to changes from natural hazards, climate change, human-made disasters, and economic shifts.
- Reduce barriers to equitable local innovations that increase community resilience and facilitates smart rebuilding in fire-damaged communities, making them less vulnerable to future disasters.
- Fund the planning and development of critical infrastructure.
- Advance environmental justice to address inequities and prioritizing vulnerable communities in recovery and resiliency strategies.

Key 2022 session legislation that OAPA hopes this budget will advance includes:

- SB 1536 A that addresses limitations on portable cooling devices and provides support for developing community cooling centers and the related HB 4058 A that creates a program to distribute air conditioners and other cooling devices to people in need.



- SB 1567 A that establishes a seismic risk mitigation fund for Oregon’s fuel storage infrastructure.
  - SB 1518 A that would establish a task force on resilient efficient buildings.
  - SB 1519 A that would provide partial property tax exemptions for community solar projects.
  - HB 4077 A that reorganizes and makes more commitment to the Environmental Justice Task Force changing it to the Environmental Justice Council.
  - \*SB 1534 A relating to the role of working and natural lands in climate resiliency.
- \* OAPA is concerned that as we write this letter SB 1534 A has not been assigned a Ways and Means Subcommittee. We have seen the impact that extreme weather events have had on Oregon working and natural land and how extreme drought, heat and wildfires have stressed and put at risk farmers, foresters and rural communities. A program to establish carbon sequestration goals and support and incentivize voluntary carbon sequestration practices will support a strong economy, especially for agricultural and timber economies in Oregon’s rural parts. Additionally, there are a number of co-benefits to carbon sequestration including:
- \* Increased water retention and soil health
  - \* Reduced risk of erosion and flooding
  - \* Drinking water source protection
  - \* Increased food and fiber production
  - \* Increased wildfire resilience
  - \* Better fish and wildlife habitat
  - \* Improved air quality

OAPA hopes that Climate Resilience Budget will provide a pathway to addressing critical issues identified in SB 1534 A.

OAPA thanks you for the opportunity to provide our thoughts on a Climate Resilience Budget.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Aaron Ray', is positioned above the name and title of the signatory.

Aaron Ray, AICP, President  
Board of Directors

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Eunice Kim', is positioned above the name and title of the signatory.

Eunice Kim, AICP, Chair  
Legislative and Policy Affairs Committee