

WASHINGTON, DC --- Today, Congressman Earl Blumenauer (D-OR) plans to participate in a press conference hosted by Scenic America, a national conservation organization, to discuss Oregon's listing as one of the nation's "Last Chance Landscapes" in a nationwide competition.

Scenic America named Oregon as one of America's most endangered places of beauty and distinctive community character because of attacks on the state's land-use planning program from Measure 7, a recently passed state ballot initiative. This measure, if upheld in court, will disrupt Oregon's quality farmland protection laws, zoning, transportation planning rules, clean air regulations and fish and wildlife protections.

Congressman Earl Blumenauer issued the following statement on the challenges facing Oregon:

"Oregon's pioneering land use planning program, adopted in 1973, has helped preserve forests, coastal areas, mountains, high desert, and fertile lands of the Willamette from the scourge of unplanned, sprawling development.

Our success in integrating economic vitality with preservation of the lands and landscapes that Oregonians hold dear has served as a model for other states and other communities as they grapple with the pressures of growth and development.

Now Measure 7 threatens to place Oregon on the endangered species list. Under Measure 7's provisions, local governments will have to either pay private property owners to follow land use and environmental laws - or be forced to waive those regulations. Either way, Oregonians are the losers."