

My mother always told me while I was growing up, “You should clean up your own mess and not leave it for others”. And, frankly, I always resented it when others left their litter cluttering my streets and schoolyard. Each piece added to the eye sore.

The same thing is true with pollution. No one likes pollution except those who profit from it. The polluter dumps their trash into the air or water not caring about the effect on others — it’s cheaper for them to do so than to clean up their own mess. At some point the victims have had enough, banding together to enact laws to curb the polluters. If the polluter wants to make a mess, they should be responsible for cleaning it up. The polluter bears the cost so that society doesn’t shoulder the burden of the pollution. It’s a fair cost of “doing business”.

Greenhouse gas emissions are a kind of pollution. Fossil fuel companies get rich selling their product while transferring the costs of the pollution (increased drought, wildfires, and extreme, deadly weather events) to others. They get the profits, we get the “bill” from the mess they make. It’s not fair. If they cause the pollution, they should pay for the clean up.

Oregon’s victims of carbon pollution have had enough. We want action now. Oregon’s Clean Energy Jobs Bill places responsibility for carbon pollution at the source - the roughly 100 biggest producers of the state’s greenhouse gases - by placing a decreasing cap on emissions and creating an economic incentive to clean it up.

Tell the fossil fuel industry, “You should clean up your own mess and not leave it for others”. Enact the Clean Energy Jobs bill now.

Linda Wallmark
Salem, OR

“The eyes of the future are looking back at us, and they are praying for us to see beyond our own time.”
Terry Tempest Williams