

Submitter: Peter E. Fargo
On Behalf Of: Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon
Committee: Senate Committee On Energy and Environment
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1187

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon and Oregon Interfaith Power & Light strongly support SB 1187. We highlighted the bill during our Oregon Interfaith Earth Summit in March, where over 400 people gathered at 18 locations across the state, and Earth Summit workshop participants prepared testimony in support of SB 1187.

Our support is based on a form of fairness that most of us learned by kindergarten: If somebody makes a mess, they should help clean it up. This is consistent with our social principles at Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon (<https://emoregon.org/advocacy-action/socialprinciples>). Further, we believe that a safe & healthy environment is a matter of human rights. Systematic pollution undermines the basic life support systems of nature. It shows disregard for the dignity of every human being and of all life. Therefore, a system of government that allows for unchecked greenhouse gas pollution constitutes a gross violation of human rights.

Fossil fuel companies have long released the greenhouse gas pollution that continues to superheat our communities, destroy private property and public infrastructure, and harm the health & safety of Oregonians. For several decades, these companies have known the risks of greenhouse gas pollution, and yet they have continued to pollute more and more. Why? To make more money. They made record profits while leaving crucial costs off the books -- the myriad impacts of greenhouse gas pollution on our households, businesses, communities, lives, and futures. Fossil fuel's greatest cost center is the full cost of pollution. Fossil fuel companies imposed that cost on all of us, our children, and our children's children.

This is a bald-faced injustice. It can no longer stand. We must right this wrong in Oregon. Polluters must pay for the harm they have caused. SB 1187 will allow the state to collect payments fairly, based on a company's share of greenhouse gas pollution. Oregon communities absolutely need these funds to help people survive in a hotter and more dangerous world.

Micah 6:8 calls on us to act justly, love mercy, and walk humbly. "He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?"

Let us all answer the call of justice and pass SB 1187.