

Submitter: Robert Wilson

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources and Wildfire

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1541

Chairman Golden and members of the Natural Resources and Wildfire Committee: My name is Robert Wilson and I am a resident of Portland (and a constituent of Senator Kathleen Taylor). I am also a member of Portland's First United Methodist Church (UMC) and I urge you to support SB 1541, the so-called "Make Polluters Pay" bill.

Our church has been deeply involved with caring for our unhoused neighbors for many years, from well before the 2021 heat dome disaster until now. And no one suffers more from the effects of pollution—from excess heat, to particulates in the air, to risk of flooding—than those who are sleeping outdoors. Not that the rest of us aren't drawn in as well, directly as well as indirectly. Our church has been finding insurance coverage to be both less available and far less affordable. The costs of underwriting the numerous climate events in recent years is a big cause.

To that last, I'm also on the steering committee of the UMCs Oregon-Idaho Conference's Creation Care and Resilience Team, working directly to hold off the worst effects of climate change, and to offer avenues of resilience when that proves impossible.

Since pollution is the root cause of human-caused climate change, it's time to put the costs where they belong. It's time to resurrect a version of the "pottery barn principle"—you break it you buy it—and to compel those corporations who are drawing wealth from Oregon to return some of it when the effects of their work are felt locally.

By funding solutions that prepare our communities for future impacts—prioritizing wildfire preparedness and recovery, and climate resilience projects; and targeting communities hit hardest by fossil fuel pollution and climate change—SP 1541 is a step in that direction.

Again, I urge you to support this measure.