

Dear Senate Committee Chair and members,

This is to express my strong support for SB1541.

The combustion of fossil fuels have played an important role in developing Oregon, but as with every industrial process (or human activity), generates waste products which should to be dealt with properly. That proper disposal has not happened with fossil fuels, in general, so that greenhouse gases are rapidly building up in the atmosphere. The link between greenhouse gases (GHG) and a warming climate has been established beyond any reasonable doubt, and the science goes back decades. The harm comes not just from warming but climate destabilization, with heat domes, heatwaves, droughts, torrential rainfall, damaging storms, and even extreme cold and snow events as polar vortexes sweep southward .

Communities around the state of Oregon, the country and the world have been ravaged in recent years by devastating disasters. The June 2021 Heat Dome is believed to have led to 83 deaths in Oregon. We had the 2020 Labor Day fires in the Oregon Cascades, the Almeda fire near Ashland, the deadly fires in Paradise (2018) and Los Angeles (2025), California and Lahaina, Hawaii (2023). Mega wildfires consume millions of acres of forests and scrubland every year, such as 1,000,000 acres in Oregon in 2020 alone. California no longer has a wildfire season since conflagrations can occur in every month of the year. Western North Carolina experienced floods and landslides in 2024 to an extent not experienced in previous decades. The country of Sri Lanka experienced devastating floods and landslides in 2025 from a supercharged, slow-moving tropical storm dumping record amounts of rain. The list goes on and on.

These climate-change-enhanced catastrophes (we cannot call them natural disasters since human activities have enhanced them) destroy communities, homes, highways, bridges, libraries, and schools. Survivors have to try and pick up their lives and rebuild; some never secure homes of a decent quality again. Some may experience homelessness. Facing huge losses, insurers either jack up their premiums or refuse to renew policies. There are now substantial areas in the USA where no home insurance policies are offered. Cash-strapped towns, counties and cities do not have the funds to fund massive infrastructure repair and climate resilience projects. Neither does the state of Oregon have large amounts of cash to support them. Meanwhile fossil fuel companies worldwide have earned \$2.7 – 4.0 trillion profit annually in recent years.

The GHG burned over the past two centuries are still in the atmosphere, they are not going away, and we have to live with the consequences. SB 1541 provides a mechanism to help affected people and communities to recover and build resilience, obtaining funds from the

largest GHG emitters, responsible for more than one billion metric tons of covered greenhouse gas emissions globally, during the covered period. It draws on the experience and precedent of the US superfund program for various toxic wastes, where taxes were authorized on domestic and imported petroleum and chemical feedstocks.

SB1541 is designed to consider effects on public health, natural resources, biodiversity, agriculture, economic development, flood preparedness and safety, housing and any other effect that the Department of Land Conservation and Development determines is relevant. Those are all key benefits for the residents of Oregon.

I urge our Oregon State Senators and Representatives to pass this critical legislation, which will support residents of your constituents in rural areas, towns, small and large cities, around the state. Thank you.