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On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources and Wildfire
Measure, Appointment or SB1541
Topic:

Hearing Testimony, SB1541, Climate Resilience Superfund Bill, Feb 5th,

Thank you for this opportunity to give testimony for SB1541 before this committee tasked with managing Natural Resources and Wildfire.

My name is Katie Larsell. I live in outer East Portland, and many of my friends live in the Sandy and Corbett areas. Areas that are prone to fire. My friend Tom and his wife Katie had to move in with their 20-something son and two roommates for 4 days during the Eagle Creek fire when their area was evacuated. This could have been just a minor inconvenience, maybe a source of funny stories, but Tom had a mild cognitive impairment. He was fine in his home – surrounded by the things he loved – but in his son's crowded apartment, he would sit and fret and then regularly ask his wife. "Are we going home now?" over and over, about every 30 minutes, his wife said, you could set your watch by it.

Disasters happen to all kinds of people, not just people who are hale, hearty, and ready to deal with them. When I hear about an evacuation, I think of my friend Tom and my 90 + year old mother, who needed a hospital bed for several years before she died. How would I have evacuated her? She could hardly sit in a car.

I grew up in the Northwest and have seen the climate change during my lifetime. I don't believe we have the resources right now for everything that is coming. Establishing an Oregon Climate Resilience Fund would allow the State of Oregon to prepare for disasters in advance and respond as they occur. We know we will have more fires, floods, and heatwaves. Let's be ready.