

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

Dear Chair Golden, Vice Chair Nash, and Members of the Senate Natural Resources and Wildfire Committee,

My name is Karen Harrington. I live in West Linn in Clackamas County. My testimony today is in strong support of SB1541, The Climate Resilience Superfund bill. I volunteer with Climate Reality Portland and several environmental organizations because I have 2 young grandchildren (Kinley was born here in Portland during the June 2021 heat dome when over 100 Oregonians lost their lives) and I am very concerned about their future, about the future of all our kids.

I urge you to support SB 1541, a bill that recognizes that the global, out of state fossil fuel companies have known and hidden the consequences of their pollution for decades, it allocates responsibility based on that pollution, and makes these polluters pay their fair share. Today it is all of us, taxpayers, who are paying for the damage they cause, whether from increasing wildfires, drought, floods, heat domes, ice storms, sea level rise...it is a long and increasingly alarming list. We pay, our cities, counties, and our state pay while these companies make billions of dollars in profits and receive government subsidies. We pay for the clean-up, we pay increasing costs for homeowners insurance, we pay higher utility bills and the rising costs of food.

The funds generated by the Climate Resilience Superfund will be used to make Oregon more resilient to wildfires, upgrade homes with energy efficient heating, cooling and weatherization, strengthen transportation and the electrical power grid, invest in agriculture and fisheries, and more, to ensure the communities most impacted by the climate crisis benefit the most.

Now is the time to make polluters pay for the increasingly alarming consequences of their deception. Oregon is not alone in recognizing that large corporations should be held accountable for their actions – there is a national bill in congress, there are 12 states with Make Polluters Pay bills up for consideration, and two states, Vermont and NY, have already passed these bills. It is now our turn to turn the page on allowing these companies to freely pollute our environment, harm our health, and jeopardize our children's future.

Thank you for your time and your service,
Karen Harrington