



# Associated Oregon Loggers, Inc.

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Good afternoon Chair Golden, Vice-Chair Nash and members of the committee,

My name is Chloe Haller, and I am here on behalf of Associated Oregon Loggers. We represent nearly 900 forest contractors who keep Oregon's forests thriving. Our members are small, family-owned businesses. They support about 23,000 working families across Oregon's urban and rural communities.

We understand the goal behind Senate Bill 1541. Make polluters pay and use the money for climate resiliency projects of which 30% would be sent to the Oregon State Fire Marshal for wildfire resilience, recovery, and mitigation. Those are honorable goals.

However, we need to talk about the direct impact of this policy on the people who Oregon relies on to actually do this resiliency work on the ground and the unintended consequences on them.

Forest contractors are price takers, not price makers. We do not set the price for logs which trickle down into the available cash for our contracts. When costs go up, we cannot pass them on. Our margins are already thin. Any new cost makes them thinner.

This bill targets large fossil fuel companies, but real-world costs often move through the system even when that's not the intention. If fuel prices rise, our members are hit fast. We are heavy fuel users because our work is remote, requires significant power and is time sensitive. There are no practical alternatives for production logging and forest restoration equipment at this time.

In fact, our fuel needs are likely to grow. Our industry has become more mechanized for a good reason. New machines help protect workers. They reduce injuries. They also help attract new workers due to their higher pay, higher skill, and increased demand. But those safer machines still run on petroleum products.

Here is the hard part. The bill aims to fund resilience projects, including wildfire work. Yet higher fuel and operating costs raise the cost of doing that same work, eroding the very objectives of the bill. If small contractors cannot stay afloat, the state will have fewer crews to do thinning operations, create fuel breaks, participate in post-fire restoration, and replanting. The contractors you count on will be fewer, larger, and farther away.

Many of our members are also the same people who show up to fight wildfires. When a fire starts, they pack up their equipment and go where they are needed. If we lose these businesses, Oregon loses a key part of its Complete and Coordinate Wildfire Suppression System. That makes fires harder and more costly to control. It also makes forest health problems worse on the ground.

We ask you to oppose SB 1541 because this program would weaken the very people Oregon depends on for resilience. Thank you and I am available for any questions.

*For more information please contact:*

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