

Submitter: Laurie Dougherty  
On Behalf Of: 350 Salem OR  
Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources and Wildfire  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1541

Chair Golden, Vice Chair Nash, and members of the Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Wildfire:

My name is Laurie Dougherty. I live in Salem and am Co-Coordinator of 350 Salem OR, local affiliate of international climate action network 350.org. On behalf of 350 Salem OR I urge your support of SB 1541 to establish the Superfund Cost Recovery Program.

Here in Oregon we have experienced many costly disasters caused or intensified by climate change: days of deadly excessive heat, droughts and floods, massive wildfires, landslides, sea level rise, coastal erosion, extreme windstorms and more. In addition to personal loss and damages, Oregon taxpayers have had to cover the state's heavy costs to repair, restore and rebuild damaged roads, bridges, parks, beaches, forests and other urban and rural infrastructure and amenities.

Several commenters have repeated the principle we learned as children: If you make a mess, you clean it up. In the case of climate-related disasters, major fossil fuel producers made the mess, but the costs of cleaning it up fell on the people and communities impacted, while the companies at fault made billions in profits. The fossil fuel industry has known for years, through its own research, that emissions from its products would endanger people and our planet. Yet they hid this research from policy makers and the public, while engaging in a campaign of disinformation that undermined and cast doubt on authentic climate science and policy conducted in the public interest.

There are scientific methods for determining whether and to what extent climate change has caused or contributed to particular disasters. In the aftermath of these disasters costs of recovery can be assessed. The Superfund program for cost recovery from environmental pollution provides a model process. So there is a clear pathway for Oregon to make climate polluters pay for the damages they caused.

Vote for SB 1541. Thank you.