

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

I have lived in Oregon since 1997. I come from the Appalachian coalfields, where industrial polluters were given free reign for generations to extract our coal and timber and sands without having to do reclamation or clean-ups. The results were a toxic waste site in Tamaqua, PA. that I doubt will ever be cleaned up; a mine fire in Centralia, PA. that will not be extinguished; toxic spills in Nitro, W. VA.; and undrinkable water in McDowell County, W. VA. that no one can use but everyone has to pay for. Appalachia is essentially a colony within the United States; our land and resources are owed by out-of-state and foreign companies and our exports are coal, lumber and people. Oregon could well go that route. I come from a mining family and had my mining papers. I love coal miners and coalfield communities and I owe most everything I have to the United Mine Workers of America. But the industries that do natural resource extraction have proven without a doubt that they are not good corporate citizens. They can pull it out, process it, sell it at a profit, and move on---but they can't and won't put it back the way it was. They will divide communities and break unions. They are notoriously corrupt. Working-class people like me will risk our health and lives for jobs, but you find that it's a bargain with the devil when you develop silicosis or can no longer hunt and fish because the forests are gone and the rivers are running orange, or your children are sick with some dreaded disease. Make the polluters pay and hold them to the highest possible standards if we must have them at all.