

Submitter: Tonja Snyder
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 Committee,

I don't have a dramatic story like many others related to climate change (like having experienced loss of property or health impacts) but I spent over 12 years growing organic produce and fruit on our property to sell at local grocery stores, farmers markets and to individuals. I know the impact of extreme weather conditions not just on our crops and thus income, but on my own ability to do the work needed to 'bring in the crops.' There is a financial cost, physical cost, and life style cost to climate change that we pay. Over those 12 years our aquifer has decreased to the point that we no longer water our grass in the summer and we hand water more plants, produce and fruit than before. We can't afford to waste any water even though I am not growing produce to sell. The smoke from the fires in 2020 made it impossible to work in our greenhouses or even outdoors. The heat dome of 2021 destroyed most of our berries that year and a good portion of my "greens." I was just one very small business. But multiply that by the hundreds/thousands of farmers and growers in the Willamette Valley. I can't imagine what was lost. In addition, this is hard work and working in extreme weather conditions is not healthy. I have MS and my energy is sapped by the heat. By working, even several hours a day in extreme weather conditions I came to appreciate the hard work of farm-workers and fieldworkers who have had to endure heat waves, fire, smoke, and loss of work. These people are essential to our food supply, local economy and our local culture. And what affects them, effects all of us. Extreme climate affects us all in several areas – economically, health wise, and in general reducing the quality of life. So just from my small ecosystem I came to see how much we all are affected and all pay for extreme weather conditions. Yet those that contribute the greatest to climate change don't pay in proportion to what they contribute. It's time corporations (since they are now considered to have the same rights as "We the People" by the Supreme Court decision of Citizens United) take responsibility for the damage they cause to our state and planet!

When you make a mess, you should clean it up. That's why I support the creation of the Climate Resilience Superfund, to hold polluters accountable by making the large, out-of-state fossil fuel companies pay their fair share.

From wildfires to polluted water, we've watched as communities across the state have felt the worst of our climate crisis. For too long, the cost of cleaning up the impacts of climate change has been the responsibility of us Oregonians and our local

governments. We've been footing the bill while fossil fuel companies rake in the profits.

That must end.

As legislators, you have the power to shift the costs from your constituents to these mega corporations. I urge you to pass SB 1541 and finally make these polluters pay for the damage they've done to communities across our state.

Tonja Snyder,
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