

Submitter: Darlene Chirman
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 urge you as members of the Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Wildfire to support SB1541, to create the Climate Resilience Superfund, to hold fossil fuel companies accountable for climate impacts. This would apply to companies with a presence in Oregon between Jan 1 1995-Dec 31, 2024, that extracted or refined fossil fuels during the covered period.

During the pandemic lockdown I was largely confined to my home, except for walking outside. Then wildfires raging in Oregon caused severe smoke events with poor air quality in Portland and going outside was not recommended. In the 2021 heat dome, extreme temperatures, climate related, were responsible for 72 deaths in Multnomah County. These deaths were largely among our most vulnerable residents, who lacked air conditioning or shade near their homes, and did not have access to cooling centers (resilience hubs). In 2022, I had a heat pump installed in my home, replacing a n old gas furnace, which provided me with air conditioning, to respond to increasing summer temperatures.

In addition, for climate mitigation, I had solar panels installed on my house, and purchased an electric car. A Climate Resilience Superfund can and should be used for wildfire resilience and firefighting in the state. In addition, there should be a grant program established, or funds added to existing programs, to provide for home hardening against wildfire, especially for low-income residents. The funds should also be available for air filtration systems and heat pumps.

The big fossil fuel companies have known for decades that their products caused climate change, and resisted efforts to be held accountable. The time is now to hold them accountable.; they should pay their fair share for adapting to climate change, and preventing and recovering from climate-related disasters. You have the opportunity to shift the costs of climate impacts from your constituents to these mega corporations by passing SB1541 this legislative session. I urge you to support this bill and move it out of your committee.

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