



FIREFIGHTERS UNITED FOR SAFETY, ETHICS & ECOLOGY

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Dear Chair Golden, Vice Chair Nash, and Members of the Senate Natural Resources and Wildfire Committee,

Firefighters United for Safety, Ethics, and Ecology (FUSEE) formally submits this letter in **strong support** of **SB 1541, the Oregon Climate Resilience Superfund bill**. Representing a national community of current, former, and retired wildland firefighters, fire managers, scientists, and educators, FUSEE is dedicated to a new paradigm of safe, ethical, and ecological fire management. We believe this legislation is a vital step toward protecting Oregon's communities and wildlands from the escalating impacts of a warming world.

The science is indisputable: human-caused greenhouse gas emissions from burning fossil fuels are the primary driver of the increased wildfire activity we see today. Global warming has accelerated fuel aridity, lengthened our fire seasons by an average of 78 days, and produced more frequent episodes of extreme, erratic fire behavior since 1987. These climate-driven changes make wildfires more dangerous to the public and far more fatal for the firefighters tasked with managing them.

The immense costs of climate-induced wildfire damages are borne almost entirely by Oregon's taxpayers. SB 1541 aligns with our core values by applying the strict liability principle, ensuring that the multinational fossil fuel firms responsible for these damages contribute their fair share toward the cleanup and resilience efforts.

We particularly support the provision in SB 1541 that allocates 30% of recovered funds to wildfire resilience. For too long, society has relied on a failing strategy of reactive, mechanized suppression; an unwinnable "war" on wildfire that is increasingly ineffective in the face of climate change.

These funds will allow Oregon to shift toward proactive fire management, including:

- **Community Preparation:** Moving beyond the narrow focus of suppression to help rural residents manage defensible space and use fire-resistant materials.
- **Ecological Restoration:** Facilitating the reintroduction of beneficial fire, such as **controlled burns**, which help restore forest resilience and reduce future risks of high-intensity wildfires.
- **Safety Improvements:** Enhancing early warning systems and protecting critical infrastructure, such as electric power grids, from wildfire impacts.

Taxpayers should not be stuck with the bill for the climate-driven megafires caused by the extraction and burning of fossil fuels. It is an **ethical imperative** to recover these costs from the largest polluters to fund the transition toward a fire-compatible society.

FUSEE urges the Oregon Legislative Assembly to pass SB 1541. By making polluters pay, Oregon can better protect its "torchbearers" on the fireline and ensure the long-term sustainability of its fire-adapted ecosystems

Signed,

 , Executive Director

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