

To: Committee on Natural Resources and Wildfire
From: Sarah Chaney
Re: Support for SB1541
Date: February 6, 2026

Senator Golden and members of the Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Wildfire

I am writing in support of SB1541.

When my family moved to Corvallis in 1970, we didn't have air conditioning, but we had a half-basement that would stay reasonably cool in the summer. When it got too hot for us upstairs, we ate dinner downstairs. Fifty-five years later, with significantly higher summer temperatures and being 55 years older, if I still lived in that house with no air conditioner, I would have probably been trying to find a cooling center or a friend's house to go to during the heat dome in June 2021. Because of climate change, not having an air conditioner in the summer can be dangerous.

There are still hundreds of thousands --could there be a million?-- people in Oregon with no air conditioning and no means to buy or install an air conditioner or a split system heat pump. And there are many thousands of unhoused individuals who suffer through hot summers without access to cool air relief.

As temperatures rise and stay high for long periods of time, and we all experience the negative consequences, the cost-recovery program proposed in SB1541 is essential to help pay for what we need to protect people and build resilience in communities across Oregon.

As I read through many letters opposing SB1541, I wish I could talk with all of those who think this bill is an additional tax, or that it will hurt businesses. Instead, this bill is a taxpayer relief bill. It's a cost recovery bill.

It makes such good sense to transfer the cost of responding to extreme weather events and its effects on our people, infrastructure and natural resources, to the companies that have profited from selling a product that has caused the climate change. For example, a very large fund filled by multinational fossil fuel companies could cover the cost of recovery from the very heavy rains and subsequent landslide on Highway 229 next to the Siletz River on December 12, 2025. At this time, the Federal Highway Emergency Relief Program should be responding to this event, but is it? Who will end up paying for the years-long project to restore the highway? Oregon taxpayers?

Please vote to move SB1541 out of committee and bring it to the Governor's desk.

Thank you.
Sarah Chaney
Corvallis