

Hello members of the Senate Natural Resources and Wildfire Committee,

I submit this testimony to you all asking that the Climate Resilience Superfund Bill is passed. Fossil Fuel companies have knowingly done irreparable harm to our environment and the ecosystems within them. Exxon Mobil had internal research from the 70's detailing the damage their activities were causing to the planet and the impending impacts.¹ I share a quote from Geoffrey Supran, lead author and former research fellow in the History of Science at Harvard.

“This paper is the first ever systematic assessment of a fossil fuel company’s climate projections, the first time we’ve been able to put a number on what they knew [...] What we found is that between 1977 and 2003, excellent scientists within Exxon modeled and predicted global warming with, frankly, shocking skill and accuracy only for the company to then spend the next couple of decades denying that very climate science.”

Exxon is not alone in this, and a 2024 Joint Staff Report from the 118th Congress House Committee On Oversight and Accountability shows that the industry writ large knew what they were doing, and chose profits over people for decades.² Spending billions of dollars enriching themselves while robbing generations to come of a future with a healthy planet. Billions of dollars that could have gone into divesting from their current business model and transitioning to a sustainable clean energy future that wouldn’t put the entire planet and its inhabitants at considerable risk. Every dollar spent on lobbying efforts, greenwashing, research and development into biofuels and sustainable aviation fuel is a dollar that should have been used for such an effort. How many more solar panels, wind turbines, battery energy storage systems and grid enhancing technologies could have been bought and installed instead? How much better would these already great technologies have been with increased investment? These technologies thrived in spite of the oil & gas companies' malfeasance to the point that energy generated from solar and wind are cheaper than fossil fuels.

¹<https://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2023/01/harvard-led-analysis-finds-exxonmobil-internal-research-accurately-predicted-climate-change/>

² https://www.budget.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/fossil_fuel_report1.pdf

Furthermore utility scale solar and wind farms can finish construction within 12- 18 months.

I would be remiss to not also share the human health impact and its related cost. I am a chronic asthmatic and have been since childhood. On a good day I would need a nebulizer treatment which can last up to an hour 5 times. In the morning as part of preparing for school, midday -missing instruction, recess or lunch- immediately upon getting home, before bed, and my mother would have to monitor my breathing as I slept. This way she could wake me up to use a nebulizer if she heard me wheezing, and be prepared to call an ambulance. I grew up in poverty and due to inequality my neighborhood was directly across the street from a major expressway. Undoubtedly contributing to my constant asthma attacks and flare ups. At times these attacks would come suddenly and without warning. As a child going from breathing without any thought needed, to struggling desperately to do so was a constant trauma of my everyday reality. By the time I reached middle school at around 11 years old, I had already come to the conclusion that I could not take becoming an adult for granted. I had developed a comfortability with my mortality that no child should ever know at such a tender age. Constant 3 am emergency room visits in which my mother had to make sure I stayed awake long enough to finish a nebulizer treatment would do that to a child.

The passage of this bill won't undo that, but it would help to pay for resilience efforts and wildfire risk management that protects children today and into the future. These monies won't pay for emergency room visits or medication, but would help reduce the need for them, and no longer put the taxpayer on the hook for what corporations knowingly did. We did not make the mess, we should not pay to clean it up! Make corporate polluters pay!