



[www.RogueClimate.org](http://www.RogueClimate.org) || PO Box 1980, Phoenix, OR 97535 || 541-301-9204

Coos Bay Office: 243 S. 2nd St. Coos Bay, OR 97420 || 541- 816-0758

Re: Rogue Climate Testimony regarding SB 688

Dear Chair Sollman, Vice-Chair Brock Smith and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment in support of SB 688.

Rogue Climate serves and works alongside Southern Oregon and South Coast communities most impacted by climate change, including low-income, rural, youth, and communities of color, by organizing for clean energy, sustainable jobs, and a healthy environment. We do so through leadership development, political education, and campaigns for policies that benefit our communities.

One aspect of SB 688 ensures Oregon's grid is prepared for wildfires, heatwaves, and extreme weather by empowering the PUC to set benchmarks on wildfire mitigation, clean energy transitions, and reliability, tying financial incentives to actual results.

The importance of this bill is highlighted by increasingly devastating wildfires in Oregon. Over 1.9 million acres were burned in Oregon last year - more than ever before in modern history. Southern Oregon communities like [Talent](#) experienced power outages during 100+ degree days as part of an effort to reduce wildfire risk, but this left people without power during dangerous, extreme temperatures. SB 688 helps ensure that utilities take a more proactive approach to wildfire mitigation that is more community-focused.

[In 2021](#), the Oregon State Legislature passed a law that requires utilities to create comprehensive plans for lowering the risk of wildfires in Oregon. For the third year in a row, utilities have failed to provide evidence that their mitigation strategies are up to the task. SB 688 incentivizes utilities to take wildfire preparedness seriously by linking financial incentives to actual outcomes.

Rogue Climate has seen firsthand the long-lasting impacts of wildfires on Oregon families in the Rogue Valley, many of which are [still recovering](#) from the Alameda Fire of 2020. SB 688 is a necessary step toward modernizing utility regulation in Oregon. By holding utilities accountable for their performance and incentivizing climate forward policies, we can protect our communities from the devastating impacts of wildfires and loss of power.

We urge you to vote in support of SB 688 to make sure that Oregon's utility system is resilient, fair, and prepared for the challenges ahead.



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Sincerely,

Jess Grady-Benson, Organizing Director

Zöe Serrano, Legislative Coordinator