

Submitter: Andy Harris  
On Behalf Of: Oregon Physicians for Social Responsibility  
Committee: Senate Committee On Energy and Environment  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1187

My name is Andy Harris, and I'm writing in support of SB 1187 on behalf of Oregon Physicians for Social Responsibility.

Since the late 1980s and early 1990s an overwhelming preponderance of the scientific community has warned of the role of fossil fuels in causing climate change. Internal memos of oil and gas companies reveal that they knew this cause and effect as well.

A 2023 article the Wall Street Journal reported, "Behind closed doors, Exxon took a very different tack: Its executives strategized over how to diminish concerns about warming temperatures, and they sought to muddle scientific findings that might hurt its oil-and-gas business, according to internal Exxon documents reviewed by The Wall Street Journal and interviews with former executives." (Matthews & Eaton, 9-14-23)

The fossil fuel industry cover-up is reminiscent of tobacco companies that knew about the harmful effects of cigarettes yet continued to deceive the public.

Since the 1980s Superfund laws have made corporations pay for the costs of their pollution, even when they didn't know their product was polluting. Why should the world's largest fossil fuel companies not help pay for recovery costs of climate-related disasters?

Last year, Vermont became the first state to pass a "climate Superfund" law, followed by New York. Nine other states besides Oregon have introduced Superfund bills: California, Connecticut, Hawaii, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, Rhode Island, Tennessee and Virginia.

The rapidly increasing cost of climate disasters, including wildfires, heat domes, severe storms, and rising sea level, are straining our state's budget. Under the current federal administration we cannot expect FEMA to help our communities recover from disasters.

The good news is that the fossil fuel industry has the money to pay for its pollution. In 2023 alone Big Oil made over \$172 billion in the United States. Without their paying a fair share, Oregon taxpayers will get stuck with increasing climate-related expenses.

Thank you for your consideration of HB 1187.

Andy Harris, MD