

Submitter: Barbara Kohnen
On Behalf Of: MultCo Dems
Committee: Senate Committee On Energy and Environment
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1187

Dear Members of the Senate Committee on Energy and Environment,

I am writing to express my strong support for the Make Climate Polluters Pay Act (SB 1187). This legislation is not just a necessary step toward environmental justice; it is also a crucial measure to save taxpayer dollars in Oregon. By requiring fossil fuel companies to pay their fair share for the damages they have caused from climate change between 1995 and 2024, we can alleviate the financial burden that has long fallen on Oregon taxpayers. These companies have profited immensely while knowing the consequences of their actions since the 1960s. It is time for them to contribute to the solutions we desperately need.

The "polluter pays" principle is a cornerstone of environmental law and reflects a fundamental sense of fairness. Under this bill, only large companies that have sold oil, gas, and coal in Oregon will be held accountable, ensuring that the financial responsibility lies with those who have directly contributed to the problem. The funds collected will be used to finance vital climate change adaptation and resilience projects throughout our state, including wildfire prevention, flood protection, and upgrades to our transportation and electric power grids. This is an opportunity to invest in our communities and infrastructure, ensuring that we are better prepared for the challenges ahead.

The legislation prioritizes those who are most affected by climate change. Forty percent of the funds collected will be dedicated to frontline communities that are disproportionately exposed to climate impacts, while thirty percent will focus on enhancing Oregon's resilience to wildfires. An estimated \$2-7 billion over the next ten years would provide much needed support in the short term as well as long-term sustainability for agriculture, fisheries, and the health of our forests and ecosystems.

The Make Climate Polluters Pay Act is a critical step toward ensuring that those who have contributed to climate change are held accountable for their actions. By passing this bill, we can secure the necessary funding to protect our communities, save taxpayer dollars, and build a more resilient Oregon. I urge you to support this important legislation and help us create a sustainable future for all Oregonians. Thank you for your consideration.