

Submitter: Caren Caldwell

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Energy and Environment

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1187

Caren's story, SB 1187

April 7, 2025

My name is Caren Caldwell. I'm from Ashland. I want to see SB 1187 pass this session because two generations of my family are now paying for wildfire recovery.

Several years ago, my husband and I purchased a home for our oldest son. It was in a low cost manufactured home park near us. He is neurodivergent and needs the extra support from Mom and Dad.

When the Alameda Fire broke out, he was washing dishes at his girlfriend's house a few miles away (THANKFULLY). His home was a total loss, burned down to ash. He had enough insurance to replace the original home, but after the fire, he could afford nothing like that house. Nothing in his price range was available anywhere. That fire had swept along Bear Creek where most of our valley's manufactured home parks sat. The parks that were able to reopen were 4-5 times more expensive than the one our son had lived in.

During the past four years since the fire, the companies that sell fossil fuels to Oregonians have grown richer in profits by billions of dollars.

But our communities continue to work toward replacing what was lost . . . by those who had the least. Many of our neighbors are still living in RVs or temporary housing. Many others moved out of town and have not been able to return because of the higher costs of housing and space rental.

I want the polluters who cause climate disaster to pay their fair share of the cost for us to recover – monies for wildfire resilience and recovery and for those neighbors who are most vulnerable to environmental disaster.

My son and his girlfriend now live in Talent, Oregon in an old farmhouse built in 1935. We are so grateful that they are safe. But they can only live there because my husband and I had to mortgage our own home to pay for theirs.

And what about those who don't have that help from family members? Make Polluters Pay could make it possible for those people to come home again.

Thank you.