

Submitter: LaVeta Gilmore Jones
On Behalf Of: Leaven Community Land and Housing Coalition
Committee: Senate Committee On Energy and Environment
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1187

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

My name is LaVeta Gilmore Jones and I live in Hillsboro, OR. in Senator Janeen Sollman's district and support the passage of SB 1187. I come here today with the ancestral energy of my grandparents, mom and her siblings, who survived the 1948 Vanport flood on Memorial Day along with approximately 18,500 other neighbors. Whether or not people believe in climate change, the devastating impact of floods, wildfires, wind and heat is very real for the environment and people.

From 2004-2007 I was a special education teacher in Springfield, OR, and a highlight for our class was a fishing field trip near the Leaburg fish hatchery located on the McKenzie river. It was a warm sunny day, the air was fresh and we were surrounded by miles and miles of tall stately evergreen trees. I still remember the big smiles on the faces of the children when they caught their first fish. Their infectious joy spread to everyone.

Thirteen years later, the 2020 Holiday Farm wildfire swept through the McKenzie river watershed with devastating impacts. The Leaburg Dam was drained to prevent debris from the fire from clogging it, leaving the Leaburg fish hatchery with a lack of fresh water. Staff braved the oncoming fire and released approximately 1.2 million Spring Chinook Salmon, steelhead, fingerlings and catchable-size trout - the kind we had caught - into the river to prevent the death of the fish. The impact of this action is still being assessed by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife who provide sole funding for the hatchery in the Oregon state budget.

Clean air, soil, and water is essential for all life in our interdependent ecosystem. Companies that extract oil, coal and gas from the land in ways that have and are polluting the environment - resulting in more intense weather and fire events - have an obligation to Oregonians to help fund clean-up and restoration operations. This includes the operation of hatcheries and other management and conservation programs. Our very existence depends on it. I ask you to support the passage of this bill.

Thank you.