



April 7, 2025

RE: On behalf of coastal communities in support for SB 1187-Make Polluters Pay

Dear Chair Sollman, Vice-Chair Brock Smith, and members of the Senate Committee on Energy and Environment,

On behalf of the [Oregon Shores Conservation Coalition](#), and our thousands of supporters and members across the state, **I am writing to express our strong support of SB 1187.** This bill holds legacy polluters accountable for the damages they've inflicted on Oregonians through their immense contribution to the climate crisis, and provides a funding mechanism to aid mitigation and resilience-building efforts as reparation. This bill would greatly benefit the Oregon coast.

The Oregon coast is already experiencing increasing hazards as a result of climate change, including sea level rise, ocean acidification and hypoxia, increased intensity and frequency of storms, and warming ocean waters. These hazards collectively put coastal communities at risk by eroding our shorelines and damaging infrastructure, and flooding homes and critical access roads. Marine ecosystems and food webs on which communities depend on for their livelihoods and economies are also collapsing. Commercially important fish are migrating to colder waters or dying in hypoxic waters, critical habitats like kelp forests and eelgrass meadows are disappearing, oyster farms are experiencing mass-mortality events, marine diseases and harmful algal blooms are on the rise. The list of intricate and interconnected ecological and social implications of this crisis is endless.

The coast is also severely underprepared for these accelerating and unprecedented changes and largely under-resourced to adapt and recover. Many coastal communities are rural and isolated with poor access to emergency services. The per capita income on the coast is also much lower than the state average and affordable housing is extremely limited, meaning many people do not have the financial means to relocate, repair, or rebuild in the event of a climate disaster. Few can pay for increasing insurance rates. Environmental justice communities are most vulnerable to these stressors.

Cities and counties on the coast are also overwhelmed with few financial resources and staff capacity to effectively adapt at the scale and pace that is needed to build meaningful resilience. SB 1187 provides a needed and proactive funding mechanism to help address these vulnerabilities. On the coast, this program could save lives and protect our delicate coastal ecosystems from complete collapse. It is also more important than ever for the state to find new ways to fund adaptation efforts, given the federal government is currently slashing the funding programs and agencies that provided this assistance in recent years (through the IRA and BIL).

It is also not fair for these local governments and taxpayers to be forced to foot the bill for damages caused by serial polluters, who have been lying to the public and casting doubt on the impacts of greenhouse gas emissions for decades. It is not fair to our children, who are sure to

be overburdened with the financial responsibility of cleaning up after countless disasters. We owe it to our coastal communities and future generations to hold polluters accountable for the uncertain and costly future the fossil fuel industry has forced on all of us.

Thank you for your consideration and we urge you to please support SB 1187.

Sincerely,

Annie Merrill
Marine Conservation Manager
Oregon Shores Conservation Coalition

In Oregon, the beaches belong to the people.

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