

Submitter: Theodora Hight
On Behalf Of: All Oregonians
Committee: Senate Committee On Energy and Environment
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1187

I'm Teddie Hight. Rob and I moved to Medford in 1989 and have claimed 900 square feet of the Rogue Valley Manor home for 6 years.

Hearing "Drill, Baby Drill" from our president, I strongly oppose his misguided cheer to the fossil fuel companies, top power brokers and shareholders. I urge passage of SB1187 as polluters have profited greatly, knowing the damage extraction and use of these energy sources cause.

Hotter and drier summers cause our increasingly destructive fire seasons.

We moved into the Manor 18 months before the Almeda Fire set a record in 2020, the first time a wildfire in OR had destroyed thousands of homes in a single day. As a pandemic joined forces with 40 mph winds to make matters even worse.

Most of the people who lost everything that day lived in manufactured homes and were Hispanic. We had 19 people from our church family who also lost everything! FEMA, Red Cross, churches, schools and nonprofits met many of their immediate needs. Yet the traumas for the majority of these people, the least affluent victims are on-going, with skyrocketing rentals and replaced housing blocking their return. 70% of the victims could not qualify for FEMA help to survive. Where do you start when everything has been consumed by a fire? Our communities came together with grass roots leaders, learning to deal with the chaos and emotional rollercoasters everyone rode. Lessons were learned the hard way. Resiliency hubs are key now to better outcomes next time.

The math was systemically bad before the fire. We lacked enough affordable housing for everyone, and certainly for the unhoused in tents, cars and on couches of generous homeowners.

Over 1,000 people left the Manor on Sept. 8th as fires raged thru the valley and roads were packed with poorly prepared carloads of seniors, headed anywhere that might provide temporary shelter. Hundreds of us were bussed to the country club and slept on the floors, gratefully for one night. We watched the Phoenix fires, just miles away, as gas tanks exploded and lit up the sky.

Worsening wildfires, besides other challenges climate wise are predicted. SB1187 would create a Superfund to help the state better deal with what lies ahead for ALL Oregonians.

Thank-you for considering my testimony supporting moving SB1187 to committee and hopefully approval this session.