

Chair Sollman and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for hearing this bill. I'm Christine Core; I'm the co-pastor at First Immanuel Lutheran Church in Portland. I am asking for your support on SB 1187: Make Polluters Pay. My husband and I lost everything in the Holiday Farm Fire, September 2020. The trauma of that night: the frantic escape from the trees exploding in a wall of fire, just feet from where we stood; the roar of the wind and flame; and the smell of the smoke; and the panic of that night; and all those that were to follow, will be forever seared into my soul. We were less than a quarter mile from the ignition site and were evacuated immediately. The last of saw of my home – a place of peace, a place where love was shared, were the flames igniting the room where we once slept.

I am here today to advocate for all those impacted by the horrors of this wildfire and all the other climate disasters we are sure to experience. The land that shaped our character and inspired our souls has a terminal disease and I am asking you to turn the tide. My husband and I were immensely grateful that we held a place of privilege enabling us to recover many of the shattered pieces of our lives. I mourn for those who have been permanently displaced and those who lack financial and emotional resources to take next steps. So many of my neighbors suffer still, from loss caused by the avarice of those refuse to take even a portion of the responsibility to mend what they have broken. Big fossil fuel corporations continue to sinfully profit from activity that make firestorms like the Holiday Farm Fire ever more frequent and increasingly destructive.

I refuse to write the obituary of a land that we are losing to greed of those who pursue the almighty dollar alone. Justice is achieved when wanton polluters pay for their fair share of the damage they have caused. I urge your support for SB 1187.

Together, we must work to restore the place where seeds will sprout, wildflowers bloom, and all of God's creatures can thrive. Thank you for your consideration.

The Rev. Christine M. Core
First Immanuel Lutheran Church, Portland, OR