

Submitter: Christina Kukuk
On Behalf Of: Sacred Organizing Coalition and Medford UCC
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 Christina Kukuk. I live and work as a pastor and hospice chaplain in Ashland, Talent, Phoenix, Medford and surrounding communities. I am here today to ask you to support SB 1187: Make Polluters Pay. This bill is important to me because of my church members who lost everything in the Almeda Fire of 2020 in Southern Oregon and because, as a chaplain, I continue to provide spiritual and emotional care to survivors of that fire.

I hear stories of loss and resilience every day. But today, the story on my mind is the senior citizen who had been a successful small business woman and was enjoying a well-earned retirement when the Almeda Fire destroyed her home.* She immediately set to work rebuilding what she lost and helping several family members and friends to do the same. She was so proud that she did not take any money from FEMA or the Red Cross or the State of Oregon or even local non-profits. But she spent through her life's savings to rebuild.

For the past five years, all of us in the Rogue Valley have been paying to rebuild what the 2020 fires destroyed. This retiree. Her neighbors. Our small businesses. Our churches. Our non-profits. Our national faith networks. Every resident of Oregon: the fires just that Labor Day weekend cost the state over \$350 million. We are paying to rebuild and to prepare for the next time – trying to fire-harden our homes, create defensible space, manage water, pay higher rents and insurance costs.

The largest polluters write off the damage done to our air, water, forests, and valleys as merely a cost of doing business. But the residents of this state are left paying it.

It is time polluters pay their fair share through a climate superfund. For these reasons, I urge your support for SB 1187. Thank you for your consideration.

(*Personally identifiable information has been obscured to protect privacy.)