

May 12, 2025

House Committee on Judiciary

Testimony of Rachelle McMaster, Otis, OR -- Yes on SB 926

Chair Kropf and members of the Committee, my name is Rachelle McMaster and I am one of the many who survived the 2020 Oregon wildfires.

Before the wildfire happened, my family resided in a modest 3 bedroom, 2 bath manufactured home. We each had our own space and we each felt safe and settled. While we were not rich, we were comfortable and could afford to take care of all our basic needs. Since the wildfire devastated our community and home, my family has struggled financially, mentally and physically. We have been forced to live in an apartment that is smaller than we are used to and that we can't make feel like a real home. We no longer have privacy and through thin walls with neighbors all around us, we are subjected to yelling and kids running around all hours of the night and this keeps us from getting sleep. We live paycheck to paycheck and struggle to pay our basic bills. On numerous occasions our power has been turned off because we didn't have enough money to pay our electricity bill.

We lost so much more than our property and precious family belongings in the fires. We lost our peace of mind and stable life.

PacifiCorp was told to shut off the power during the fire and they chose not to. How much could have been saved had they just done the right thing? Now they are looking for ways to evade their responsibility should this ever happen again.

A jury heard the facts of my case and offered some justice so my family could start rebuilding our lives. We have yet to receive anything almost five years later. It's high time for Pacific Power to make it right with everyone who experienced this traumatic event, due in part to their negligence. The court has ruled that they should help those they've harmed, yet they refuse to do so. Please make them do the right thing.

I urge you to vote **Yes on SB 926!** Thank you!