

February 10, 2026

Senator Floyd Prozanski

Chair, Senate Judiciary Committee

900 Court Street, NE

Salem, OR 97301

RE: Opposition to SB 1553 – Wildfire Cost Recovery

Chair Prozanski, and members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Seaside Chamber of Commerce, representing a broad network of businesses and employers along Oregon’s North Coast, we respectfully submit the following testimony in opposition to Senate Bill 1553. Our organization is committed to fostering a strong business environment, promoting long-term economic stability, and supporting community vitality. We are concerned that SB 1553 would work against these priorities.

Coastal communities depend heavily on consistent, reliable energy service and a regulatory environment that encourages investment. SB 1553 introduces new financial and regulatory uncertainties for PacifiCorp, a company that plays a vital role in powering the Seaside area and supporting local commerce. The additional financial obligations created by the bill could have significant ripple effects on the businesses and residents we serve.

At a time when many communities are grappling with affordability challenges, the bill’s duplicative and punitive requirements risk increasing energy costs for customers. These cost pressures would be felt most by small businesses, hospitality employers, and service-sector jobs that are the backbone of Seaside’s local economy.

Sustained investment in infrastructure upgrades is essential for maintaining a resilient and modern electrical system. Projects involving wildfire mitigation, transmission improvements, system hardening, and renewable integration are especially important on the North Coast. SB 1553 creates real concerns about whether Oregon will be viewed as a stable place to invest. By singling out one company with retroactive and highly specific requirements, the bill could discourage the capital investments needed to support regional infrastructure and economic growth.

Wildfire issues require statewide coordination and thoughtful long-term solutions. PacifiCorp has demonstrated a willingness to address claims, participate in legal processes, and invest in wildfire mitigation strategies. SB 1553 does not advance collaborative wildfire policy. Instead, it sets a precedent of targeting a single utility in a way that undermines both the legal process and Oregon’s economic climate.

For the Seaside business community, dependable energy, a predictable regulatory environment, and a strong investment climate are fundamental. SB 1553 threatens all three and could impose lasting consequences across our region.

We respectfully urge the committee to reject SB 1553 and consider more comprehensive and cooperative approaches to wildfire planning and cost management.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our perspective.

Sincerely,



Sadie Mercer

Sadie Mercer

Executive Director

Seaside Chamber of Commerce

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cc: Senator Kim Thatcher, Vice-Chair

Senator Anthony Broadman

Senator Sara Gelser Blouin

Senator James I. Manning Jr.

Senator Mike McLane