



February 2, 2026

Members of the Oregon Legislature

Re: Opposition to Climate Superfund Legislation – SB 1541

Dear Members of the Legislature:

We are a coalition of businesses and associations that represent employers, workers, and job creators across Oregon. Our organizations are committed to a fair, predictable, and balanced environment in which Oregon’s economy can grow and communities can thrive. For these reasons, we respectfully ask that you oppose proposals to establish a so-called “Climate Superfund” in Oregon.

We recognize and appreciate the Governor and Legislature’s recent emphasis on Oregon’s prosperity initiatives and the acknowledgment that the state is at a pivotal moment for its economic future. Policymakers have rightly focused on restoring competitiveness, improving affordability, and creating the conditions necessary for long-term economic growth. Unfortunately, a climate superfund proposal flies directly in the face of those goals.

We welcome continued dialogue on Oregon’s climate and resilience needs. However, this proposal raises serious concerns related to affordability, impacts on jobs and the economy, fairness, and the message it sends to the broader business community—particularly at a time when Oregon is seeking to strengthen its economic foundation.

Affordability

Climate policy should be smart, deliberate, and structured in a way that allows the Legislature to maintain clear control and oversight over costs. Predictability matters for households, employers, and the broader economy.

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Oregonians are already facing significant cost-of-living pressures. A climate superfund would impose large, retroactive financial liabilities with no clear cap, timeline, or certainty about future reassessments. When costs are unknown and subject to change, they are conservatively priced into the market and flow through supply chains as higher prices paid by households and businesses.

Because energy costs are embedded in transportation, home heating, food production, health care delivery, and consumer goods, this uncertainty does not remain isolated. It raises the cost of everyday necessities and disproportionately impacts working families, seniors, rural communities, and small businesses. At a time when state leadership has identified affordability and economic stability as central priorities, a policy framework that creates open-ended and unpredictable costs moves Oregon in the wrong direction.

Impact on Jobs, Competitiveness, and Oregon's Economic Prosperity

Energy and fuel costs affect nearly every sector of Oregon's economy. Manufacturing, agriculture, forestry, construction, transportation, health care, and small businesses all depend on affordable and reliable energy to operate.

By imposing retroactive and unpredictable liabilities, a climate superfund would increase costs for employers across the economy, putting jobs at risk and directly undermining efforts to improve Oregon's competitiveness, attract investment, and grow family-wage employment. These impacts would ripple statewide, weakening the very economic momentum that state leaders have emphasized as essential to Oregon's future.

Unfairness

It is fundamentally unfair to impose retroactive financial penalties on companies for producing and supplying legal products that society has relied on for decades and continues to rely on today.

These products were demanded by consumers and businesses and were used in reliance on public policy decisions made over many years. Singling out one segment of the economy for past activity—while ignoring the shared responsibility across society—raises serious fairness concerns. In practice, the costs of this approach would ultimately be borne by Oregon households and small businesses.

Sending the Wrong Message at a Critical Moment

At a time when Oregon's leaders are calling for policies that promote prosperity, predictability, and economic renewal, climate superfund legislation sends exactly the wrong message.

It tells businesses that even if they comply with the law and operate within regulatory frameworks, they may later face massive retroactive penalties. This level of uncertainty discourages investment, weakens confidence, and undermines Oregon's efforts to improve its economic climate—without delivering clear or timely climate benefits.

Similar laws in other states are already facing legal challenges, raising serious constitutional questions and increasing the likelihood of years of litigation before any funds could be put to use.

Conclusion

Given the affordability impacts on households, the risks to jobs and economic competitiveness, the fundamental unfairness of retroactive liability, and the inconsistency of this proposal with Oregon's stated prosperity goals, we respectfully urge you to oppose climate superfund legislation.

We remain willing to engage in constructive discussions about climate resilience and emissions reduction, but those efforts must align with Oregon's economic priorities and avoid worsening the affordability challenges facing families and communities across the state.

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