

For Immediate Release
February 21, 2025

Advocates Applaud Introduction of Groundbreaking Climate Superfund Act

New Legislation to Hold Big Polluters Accountable for California's Climate Damage

SACRAMENTO—Environmental and social justice advocates are applauding the introduction of the Polluters Pay Climate Superfund Act, a common sense bill that would require fossil fuel corporations to pay for the climate devastation they have fueled across California. The companion bills SB 684 and AB 1243, introduced today by Sen. Caroline Menjivar (D-San Fernando Valley) and Asm. Dawn Addis (D-San Luis Obispo), seek to establish a statewide program under California's Environmental Protection Agency to assess fees on the largest historical emitters of climate pollution. The legislation follows the historic wildfires in Los Angeles, which caused \$250 billion in damages and took the lives of 29 people.

Climate change, driven primarily by extracting and burning of fossil fuels, has intensified these disasters, making extreme heat, wildfires, floods, and storms more severe and frequent. The climate crisis is projected to cost the state hundreds of billions of dollars by 2050 and right now taxpayers are on the hook for paying those costs.

The Polluters Pay Climate Superfund Act would require fossil fuel producers and refiners responsible for more than 1 billion tons of greenhouse gas pollution between 1990 and 2024 to pay into a newly established Polluters Pay Climate Fund. This fund would finance projects such as:

- Funding community resilience & sustainable infrastructure.
- Protecting the state budget & lowering costs for families.
- Ensuring the largest polluters—not taxpayers—pays for the climate damages they fuel.

The bill is sponsored by the Center for Biological Diversity, Campaign for a Safe and Healthy California, and California Environmental Voters, with support from more than 130 organizations across the state who have voiced their support for its introduction:

"The L.A. fires show with heartbreaking clarity how much we need this bill to make the biggest climate polluters pay for the astronomical damage they've caused," **said Kassie Siegel, director of the Center for Biological Diversity's Climate Law Institute.** "The public shouldn't be shelling out billions of dollars every year to recover from severe and deadly climate disasters. By passing this commonsense bill, state lawmakers can put the financial burden of climate damage on giant polluting companies, where it belongs."

"California is facing billions in costs from ongoing devastation and climate impacts, while fossil fuel companies continue profiting from the crisis they created. Right now, taxpayers are left covering the damages, driving up costs for working families," **said Mary Creasman, Chief**

Executive Officer, California Environmental Voters. “Holding corporate polluters accountable is a necessary step to protecting our economy, strengthening climate resilience, and making California more affordable for everyone. That’s why the Polluters Pay Superfund is so critical – we have to ensure that industry pays their fair share, rather than leaving communities to bear the burden alone.”

“Campaign for a Safe and Healthy California is proud to stand alongside a diverse coalition of community leaders and environmental justice organizations in support of the Polluters Pay Climate Superfund Act,” said **Martha Dina Arguello, Executive Director of Physicians for Social Responsibility-Los Angeles and CSHC Steering Committee Member.** “This bill represents a unified effort to ensure that Big Oil polluters, who have reaped billions in profits while knowingly sacrificing the health and well-being of frontline environmental justice communities and fueling the climate crisis, are held accountable for the damage they have done. Together, Physicians for Social Responsibility-Los Angeles, Communities for a Better Environment, California Environmental Justice Alliance, Black Women for Wellness Action Project, Center on Race, Poverty & the Environment, and Asian Pacific Environmental Network Action demand justice for all California communities by making polluters pay.”

“It’s high time that fossil fuel polluters stop forcing California’s working families to shoulder the costs of climate change while they profit from polluting our air and water,” said **Sara Zimmerman, Executive Director of the Climate Equity Policy Center.** “Big oil is lining their pockets at the expense of our lives. The fossil fuel industry has known for decades that oil and gas extraction and use hurt our kids, our communities, and our climate. Climate emissions and fossil fuel air pollution hurt all of us, but hurt low income communities and communities of color the most. The Polluters Pay Climate Superfund Act of 2025 requires fossil fuel polluters to start taking responsibility for these harms.”

“If recent months have shown us anything, it’s that California is facing an unprecedented set of climate-related challenges. We are seeing the impacts of fossil fuel-driven climate chaos all around us: devastating wildfires, periods of intense heat and flooding, and poor air quality plaguing our communities. Californians are in desperate need of expanded resources to protect our communities, and we know we can’t rely on any help from the corrupt, vindictive Trump-Musk regime,” said **Nicole Ghio, California Director at Food & Water Watch.** “The Polluters Pay Climate Superfund will make corporate polluters pay for the damages they cause and ensure we have proper resources to address the climate crisis and rebuild after disasters like January’s wildfires. The Polluters Pay Climate Superfund bill sends the clear message that the major polluters that are responsible – not taxpayers – will have to pay for the damage they cause.”

“For our generation especially, climate change is the biggest threat. That’s why young people like me from across San Diego County are ready to advocate for this important Superfund bill with all we’ve got,” said **Diego Sandoval, Youth v. Oil member** and junior at Eastlake High School. “Californians have long suffered at the hands of Big Oil, and it’s time that our state’s

leadership take a firm stand. We deserve a liveable future and we will not stand by as our communities are destroyed by climate change.”

“This bill is the right idea at the right time,” said **Janet Cox, Climate Action California’s CEO**. “California must find a way to pay the humongous bills that will keep coming due from climate-driven disasters. Our taxpayers can fund only so many firefighters, flood cleanups, drought-caused farm emergencies, and waves of ER visits to public hospitals when our people suffer heatstroke and lung and heart disease caused by wildfire smoke. Borrowing from the future with modest \$10 billion bonds cannot keep up with mounting damage. We know who has the money we’ve been paying at the pump. It’s time to send a bill!”

“With the Trump administration planning to slash federal disaster response by 84%, state action has never been more critical. This bill uses proven science to make major polluters pay their fair share, creating a dedicated funding stream for climate resilience right in California. While oil giants like Exxon and Chevron report \$50 billion in combined profits, our communities are bearing one hundred percent of the cost of escalating disasters. [Seven in ten](#) California voters support this commonsense approach. It’s time to bring climate jobs, community resiliency, and sustainable infrastructure to California - paid for by Big Oil.” said **Cassidy DiPaola, Communications Director, Make Polluters Pay**

“Establishing a Climate Superfund in California will hold big polluters accountable for the climate damages that they have caused from decades of greenhouse gas emissions,” said **Chloe Ames, Policy Advisor for NextGen California**. “The recent wildfires in Southern California are a stark reminder of the cost of climate pollution to all Californians, and these disasters are only expected to continue if we don’t meet the moment and take climate action. The NextGen California team agrees it is time for California to join New York and Vermont to put the onus on those responsible – fossil fuel corporations that have knowingly polluted our air, water, and communities.”