



AB 1243: Polluters Pay Climate Superfund Act of 2025

SUMMARY

AB 1243, the Polluters Pay Climate Superfund Act of 2025, establishes a program in California's Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA) to assess fees on the largest fossil fuel polluters for their fair share of the damage their products have inflicted on California. The fees will initially pay for a cost study to quantify climate impacts to the state and later fund projects and programs to mitigate, remedy, and prevent climate change costs and harms.

Without this bill, California taxpayers will continue to pay for the costs of climate damage, while the polluters responsible—who have raked in massive profits exploiting the environment—avoid paying their fair share.

BACKGROUND

The climate crisis is a fossil fuel crisis. Fossil fuels account for nearly 90% of all CO₂ emissions and more than 75% of global greenhouse gas emissions. Published, peer-reviewed research using polluters' own self-reported data shows that about two-thirds of human-caused CO₂ and methane emissions come from just 90 of the world's largest fossil fuel companies. These polluters have profited by producing and selling fossil fuels while shifting the burden of their pollution costs onto California families, forcing taxpayers to pay the price for the damage their products have caused.

The idea of a "Climate Superfund" is not a new concept. There is precedent for government entities to seek compensation from companies whose products caused harm to their citizens. Dating back to the 1990s, California has implemented a law assessing compensatory fees against lead paint and leaded gas producers to fund programs to screen and treat lead poisoning

in children. In addition, the federal Superfund law, the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, & Liability Act of 1980 (CERCLA), imposes retroactive liability on multiple parties, including the generators of waste, for the cleanup of contaminated sites.

PROBLEM

The climate crisis is costing Californians billions every year. The recent Los Angeles wildfires are just the latest example of the escalating harms Californians face from climate-fueled disasters. The fires killed at least 29 people, destroyed thousands of homes, displaced nearly 200,000 people, and caused more than \$250 billion in damages and losses.

The climate crisis will only continue to exacerbate these disasters and worsen our affordability crisis. California's Fourth Climate Assessment estimated that by 2050, the direct economic impacts of climate change will be at least \$113 billion every year. That projection does not include loss of human life or property due to wildfires or ecological impacts due to wildfire, floods, or drought.

Polluters must take responsibility for their share of the burden and pay for the damages their pollution caused. It is imperative that we act now to ensure the health, safety and economic security of our communities. Unless something changes, the state, tribes, local governments, and taxpayers will be stuck paying these multibillion-dollar bills for climate damage.

SOLUTION

AB 1243 takes an important step to address our climate crisis and help working families by requiring the world's largest fossil fuel polluters to compensate Californians for the damage caused

by their products. Specifically, it will require CalEPA to:

- Complete a comprehensive statewide study to establish the cost of climate damages to the state of California through 2045
- Identify responsible parties, fossil fuel producers that did business in California and emitted more than one billion metric tons CO₂-equivalent from the extraction, refining, and combustion of their products during the covered time period of 1990 through 2024
- Assess and collect fair and proportionate fees from responsible parties to be paid into the Polluters Pay Climate Superfund
- Allocate expenditures from the fund, per Legislative guidance, to projects supporting climate resilience, mitigation, and infrastructure that support communities, businesses, and workers.

AB 1243 will save Californians money. The bill ensures that the fees collected will fund projects and programs to remedy or prevent climate-related costs and harms. It also prioritizes labor and job standards and dedicates at least 40% of the funds to benefit disadvantaged communities.

Californians have paid enough; it's time for polluters to pay so taxpayers don't have to.

SUPPORT

- California Environmental Voters (co-sponsor)
- Campaign for a Safe and Healthy California (co-sponsor)
- Center for Biological Diversity (co-sponsor)
- 1000 Grandmothers
- 198 Methods
- 350 Bay Area Action
- 350 Conejo / San Fernando Valley
- 350 Contra Costa Action
- 350 Humboldt
- 350 Sacramento
- 350 Santa Barbara
- 350 Southland Legislative Alliance
- 350 Ventura County Climate Hub

- 350.org
- 350 Marin
- Alliance of Californians for Community Empowerment (ACCE)
- Action for the Climate Emergency
- Active San Gabriel Valley
- American Academy of Pediatrics, California
- American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), AFL-CIO
- American Lung Association
- Asian Pacific Environmental Network
- Avaaz
- Azul
- Ballona Institute
- Bay Area-System Change not Climate Change
- Benioff Ocean Science Laboratory
- Better APC
- Better Future Project
- Beyond Extreme Energy
- Bicycling Monterey
- Biofuelwatch
- Black Women for Wellness Action Project
- CA Youth vs. Big Oil
- California Association of Professional Employees
- California Businesses for Climate Justice
- California Calls
- California Climate Voters
- California Environmental Justice Alliance Action
- CFT – A Union of Educators & Classified Professionals
- California Green New Deal Coalition
- California Institute for Biodiversity
- California Interfaith Power & Light
- California Nurses Association
- California Nurses for Environmental Health and Justice
- Californians Against Waste
- Carbon Cycle Institute
- CCAN Action Fund
- Center for Community Action and Environmental Justice
- Center for Developing Leadership in Science
- Center on Race, Poverty & the Environment
- Central California Asthma Collaborative

- Central California Environmental Justice Network
- CERBAT
- Church and Society of First Presbyterian Church of San Anselmo
- Clean Water Action California
- CleanEarth4Kids.org
- Climate Action California
- Climate Action Campaign
- Climate Defenders
- Climate Equity Policy Center
- Climate First: Replacing Oil & Gas (CFROG)
- Climate Hawks Vote
- Climate Health Now
- Climate Reality Project – Orange County
- Climate Reality Project – San Francisco Bay Area
- Climate Reality Project – California Coalition
- Climate Reality Project - San Diego
- Climate Reality Project - San Fernando Valley Chapter
- Coalition for Clean Air
- Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights (CHIRLA)
- Coastal Defenders
- Coastal Lands Action Network
- Communities for a Better Environment
- Conejo Climate Coalition
- Consumer Attorneys of California
- Consumer Watchdog
- Courage California
- Culver City Democratic Club
- Dayenu: A Jewish Call to Climate Action
- Defend Ballona Wetlands
- Democrats of Rossmoor
- Dr. Bronner's
- Earth Ethics
- Eco Office of ASUC Senator China Duff
- Ekō
- Elders Climate Action
- Elected Officials to Protect America
- Endangered Habitats League
- Environmental Center of San Diego
- Environmental Defense Center
- Evergreen Action
- Extinction Rebellion San Francisco Bay Area
- FACTS – Families Advocating for Chemical and Toxics Safety

- Food & Water Watch
- Fossil Free California
- Fossil Free Media
- FracTracker Alliance
- Fridays for Future Sacramento
- Friends Committee on Legislation of California
- Friends of the Earth
- Friends of the River
- Glendale Environmental Coalition
- Good Neighbor Steering Committee of Benicia
- GreenFaith
- Greenpeace USA
- GRID Alternatives
- Human Impact Partners
- IKAR
- ILWU Northern California District Council
- Immaculate Heart Community Environmental Commission
- Indivisible Marin
- Indivisible California: StateStrong
- Little Manila Rising
- Long Beach Alliance for Clean Energy
- Los Angeles Climate Reality Project
- Los Angeles County Democratic Party
- Los Angeles Faith & Ecology Network
- Make Polluters Pay National Campaign
- Mill Valley Seniors for Peace
- Mothers Out Front Silicon Valley
- Move LA
- Natural Resources Defense Council
- NextGen California
- No Drilling Contra Costa
- NorCal Elder Climate Action
- Oil and Gas Action Network
- Oil Change International
- Our Revolution
- Our Time to Act
- Oxfam America
- Pacific Environment
- Physicians for Social Responsibility – Los Angeles
- Physicians for Social Responsibility – San Francisco Bay Area
- Physicians for Social Responsibility – Pennsylvania
- Physicians for Social Responsibility – Sacramento
- PODER

- Presente.org
- Protect Monterey County
- Protect Playa Now
- Public Citizen
- Reclaim Our Power!
- Redeemer Community Partnership
- Resilient Palisades
- Rise Economy
- Rising Sun Center for Opportunity
- RootsAction.org
- San Diego Pediatricians for Clean Air
- San Francisco Baykeeper
- SanDiego350
- Santa Cruz Climate Action Network
- Santa Cruz County Democratic Central Committee
- SEE (Social Eco Education)
- Seventh Generation
- Sierra Club California
- SoCal 350 Climate Action
- Society of Native Nations
- Spottswoode Winery, Inc.
- Strategic Concepts in Organizing and Policy Education (SCOPE)
- Sunflower Alliance
- Sunrise Bay Area
- Sunrise Movement
- Sunrise Movement LA
- Sustainable Mill Valley
- Sustainable Rossmoor
- Synergistic Solutions
- The Climate Center
- The Phoenix Group
- The Story of Stuff Project
- The Wendy and Eric Schmidt Center for Data Science & Environment at UC Berkeley
- Third Act
- Third Act Bay Area
- Third Act Sacramento
- Third Act SoCal
- Third Act Upstate New York
- TIAA-Divest!
- Transition Sebastopol
- UNIDOS Network Inc.
- Vote Solar
- Voters of Tomorrow
- Voting 4 Climate & Health
- West Berkeley Alliance for Clean Air and Safe Jobs

- WildEarth Guardians
- Youth For Earth
- Youth v. Oil
- Youth Will
- Youth4Climate

CONTACT

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