

These comments are in general support of the City of Portland's Healthy and Clean Air Protection Fees. This past year demonstrated the continued threat to Oregonians' health from serious climate change related sources in the form of a respiratory pandemic, high risk levels from wildfire smoke, and the continuation of Portland being in the 95th percentile nationally in terms of diesel exposure (with 65% emanating from non-road sources). Furthermore, BIPOC communities are at 2-3x the risk of higher diesel exposure than whites (further conflating COVID-19 risk as well).

For far too long the physical, economic, emotional, and social well-being costs of pollution and climate change have not been tied to the major polluters contributing to greenhouse gas emissions and stationary air pollution. These policies are a step in a positive direction and a balanced approach to holding companies responsible for the impact of their actions and providing funds to help mitigate these problems.

Unfortunately, the proposed fees are not substantial enough either to offset the costs of existing polluters nor deter new polluters from going into business and, as such, should be increased and possibly tied to some sort of truly incentivizing escalation mechanism that could address the real impacts and help lead to decarbonization and positive air quality with reduced emissions. We applaud the City's efforts, urge you to actually consider increasing the proposed fees, and to hold strong against the inevitable business pushbacks.

The climate crisis is increasing far faster than anticipated and the City must be looking for concrete steps towards annual decarbonization in the realm of about 10% a year. This is a positive step in that direction and we look forward to more bold policy moves along these lines in the near future.