

Patricia O'Neil  
Wells  
LD 1870

Climate-driven storms are costing Mainers billions of dollars. Last year's storms caused \$90 million in damage to public infrastructure, not to mention the millions of dollars of damage done to homes and businesses. I live in Wells, about two miles from the beach. I walk the beach nearly every day and I saw this damage firsthand. Dunes where our piping plovers nest every Spring were gone. Not damaged. Not diminished. Gone. We all saw the videos of waves crashing over the seawall, flooding Webhannet Drive and other coastal roads, chewing up the pavement, and flooding nearby homes. These are not normal storms and the scientists tell us the storms will only grow more intense in the years to come. Towns like Wells do not have the financial resources to fund the adaptation that will be necessary to keep people and property safe as this climate crisis unfolds.

The largest fossil fuel corporations have contributed significantly to our changing climate and should pay to fix the damage. They have known for decades that their products were dangerously warming our planet and have done nothing to ameliorate the damage done to all of creation as a result. In fact they quite intentionally hid the knowledge they had. Last year, the hottest year on record, saw these companies enjoying record profits as towns like Wells grappled with how to pay for the damage caused by climate-driven storms.. It is time to make polluters pay.

"Polluters Pay" is a time-tested principle. Bipartisan legislators in New York and Vermont have crafted and passed innovative legislation, modeled on the original Superfund law which has withstood legal scrutiny for years, to hold fossil fuel corporations accountable. Maine has an opportunity to join these national leaders by passing LD 1870. I urge you to vote "Ought to Pass." This law will help Maine determine the true cost of dealing with climate change and require the largest climate polluters to pay for the climate damage they caused.