

October 2, 2025

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Mayor Stephen Zollman and Sebastopol City Council  
7120 Bodega Ave., Sebastopol, CA 95472  
Via Email: [citycouncil@cityofsebastopol.gov](mailto:citycouncil@cityofsebastopol.gov)

Re: Agenda Item #6 on the 10/7/25 City Council Agenda:  
Consideration of Request for Council Support of Polluters  
Pay Climate Superfund Legislation, AB 1243 and SB 684

Dear Mayor Zollman and Councilmembers,

I am writing to urge the Council to approve the adoption of a Resolution in Support of the Polluters Pay Climate Superfund legislation, currently pending in the California Legislature.

I would like to clarify a few things about the request, originally for a Council Resolution of Support.

### 1. Who is requesting a Resolution of Support?

The idea of a request for local government resolutions of support, and my request to the Sebastopol City Council, is not my idea. This request is from the bill authors, Senator Caroline Menjivar and Assemblymember Dawn Addis. They are making this request at this time as a deliberate strategy. Yes, the bills are on pause until the 2026 session starts. The idea is to use this interim period to secure local government resolutions in support so that when the bills are calendared for hearings in January the authors, sponsors, and supporters can hit the ground running with Resolutions in hand. This will be much easier to demonstrate robust local government support than to try to scramble in the heat of committee season with pending deadlines to get letters submitted on time.

### 2. Why are local governments being asked to support?

This is about protecting Sebastopol's budget. The policy in question – establishing a Climate Superfund, analogous to

the long-standing federal Toxic Superfund law,<sup>1</sup> is specifically designed to help local governments like Sebastopol pay for damages caused by climate change. Doing so is possible now given the advances in attribution science.<sup>2</sup> The megafires in southern California in January are estimated to have cost somewhere between \$250B and \$275B in economic damages to those local governments.<sup>3</sup> When (not if) the next flood, wildfire, extreme heat episode, or other climate calamity hits Sebastopol, who will pay? It is not too soon to put a stake in the ground and affirm Sebastopol's solid support for this policy.

### **3. Why a Resolution and not letters?**

The request is for a single Resolution as opposed to two letters for two reasons: 1) in the case of a Resolution, only one is needed, as it is about the policy, not the bills per se; and 2) A Resolution is more "evergreen" and can be used at any time in the 2026 session to demonstrate local government support.

### **4. Both bills are still active.**

The legislature operates in two-year cycles. 2025 is the first year of a 2-year cycle. AB 1243 and SB 684 are two-year bills. They will be calendared for committee hearings in 2026 with the same bill numbers, authors, and sponsors. There is no question that the bills are not going to be heard in committee again this year, in fact, the 2025 session is concluded. From the beginning, this request was made in recognition of the fact that the bills won't be heard this year.

### **5. California League of Cities**

Sebastopol does not need guidance from the California League of Cities to adopt a Resolution. Sebastopol has every right to take position on matters of its choosing. In fact, the following cities have already adopted Resolutions<sup>4</sup> regardless of the position of the League:

- Los Angeles
- San Diego
- San Francisco
- San José
- Santa Cruz County
- Albany
- Berkeley
- La Mesa
- Laguna Beach
- Oxnard
- Port Hueneme

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.epa.gov/superfund/superfund-cercla-overview>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.ucs.org/resources/attribution-science>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.latimes.com/business/story/2025-01-24/estimated-cost-of-fire-damage-balloons-to-more-than-250-billion>

<sup>4</sup> Copies of all Resolutions available upon request

## 6. The Broader Context:

The Climate Superfund concept is a national movement. New York and Vermont have enacted this policy. It's in the works in New Jersey and Massachusetts and in fact a total of 11 states are considering the policy.<sup>5</sup> Whether or not these two specific bills survive in 2026 is not the end of the story. The bill authors, co-authors, sponsors, and supporters are committed to advocating this policy until it is enacted. It is not too early for Sebastopol to demonstrate its understanding and support for this

## 7. Frequently Asked Questions

Lastly, over the course of the campaign during the past ten months, several frequently asked questions have emerged. The campaign has compiled them and responded to them in this ["Mythbusters" FactSheet](#).<sup>6</sup> It includes a response to the number one question: won't the oil companies just pass the cost along to consumers. It is accessible in the link above, the footnote below, and I've attached it as a PDF. More resources of this kind are available from the campaign.

As staff has correctly affirmed, there is no fiscal impact to Sebastopol. The only prospective fiscal impact is positive, in that if and when the Climate Superfund becomes a reality, and has funds available, Sebastopol could have a new resource to help pay for climate impacts.

On October 7, please approve a Resolution of Support for California's Polluters Pay Climate Superfund law.

As always, I stand ready to respond to any questions you might have.

Respectfully,



Woody Hastings,  
Phase Out Polluting Fuels Program Director,  
The Climate Center

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<sup>5</sup> <https://truthout.org/articles/11-states-are-eyeing-laws-to-make-fossil-fuel-industry-pay-for-climate-crisis/>

<sup>6</sup> <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1m0YLYM66cDcV1QnO1LRQGLI3GxoMnSZ6/view?usp=sharing>