

Submitter: Catherine Bax
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Emergency Management, General Government, and Veterans
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2151

Date: March 1, 2025

To: House Committee On Emergency Management, General Government, and Veterans

Subject: Support HB 2151

Dear Chair Tran, Vice-Chair Grayber, Vice-Chair Lewis, and members of the House Committee on

Emergency Management, General Government, and Veterans,

My name is Catherine Bax. I am 76 years old, a resident of Portland, a retired physician assistant, a life-long Oregonian and concerned about the Oregon we leave to our children. I am very concerned about the environmental quality of the land but also of the financial burdens that we leave because we just ignored the problems facing us.

I strongly urge you to pass HB 2151.

Scientists predict there is about a 37% chance that an earthquake of 7.1+ magnitude in the Cascadia Subduction Zone will occur in the next 50 years. More than 90% of all liquid fuel in Oregon is stored at facilities in the Critical Energy Infrastructure (CEI) Hub. The CEI Hub was built on unstable soil subject to liquefaction. A Cascadia Subduction Zone (CSZ) earthquake in the Critical Energy Infrastructure (CEI) Hub would result in an oil spill akin to the BP Deepwater Horizon disaster, immeasurable cultural losses, detrimental impacts to human health, and massive costs in damages, possibly totaling to billions. Oregon needs get serious about this threat NOW.

Please support HB 2151 which expands the ways monies in the Seismic Risk Mitigation Fund may be received and used, which is essential for fuel-related disaster preparedness and response.

As a health care professional, I am concerned about the health and safety risks of a disaster in the CEI Hub. Not only to those of us who live near the Hub but to all Oregonians who will be burdened with the results of the disaster when it eventually happens. Volatile fuels, additives and gasses will be spewed into the atmosphere, the soil and the river. Likely the fuels will ignite and release a toxic plume of air pollutants including volatile organic compounds, nitrogen oxides, particulate matter and sulfur dioxide. These are associated with increased risks of cancer, asthma, exacerbation of chronic respiratory diseases, and strokes. The health costs of a CEI Hub disaster will be enormous. In addition, the costs to cleanup an oil spill as a result of a Cascadia Subduction Zone (CSZ) earthquake are projected to be between \$109 million to \$1.4 billion.

Oregon needs to take action now. The cost of not doing this will be far greater if we continue to put it off. Actually the costs will be unaffordable for our state and at this

point, help from the Federal Government is not something we should count on. In addition, do not adopt an amendment that would pre-empt action by an entity other than the State, precludes another governmental entity such as Multnomah County taking action now.

Pass this bill now and let's get going on this. Don't let Oregon fall prey to the tried-and-true delay tactics of the fossil fuel industry. We need to take action NOW.

Thank you.

Catherine Bax