

February 7, 2022

TO: Chair Lieber, Vice-Chair Findley, Members of Senate Committee on Energy and Environment

There is ample evidence – and ample testimony for this hearing – on the statewide vulnerability associated with our Critical Energy Infrastructure (CEI) hub and our broader vulnerability associated with energy disruptions. Yumei Wang has detailed the direct and interdependent effects of a disruption, Chris Goldfinger has offered extensive evidence on the seismic hazards, and there's substantial additional testimony on specific downstream effects.

These are not new findings: Yumei and DOGAMI started working on the hazards and related vulnerabilities in 2007, we incorporated them into the 2013 Oregon Resilience Plan and the associated recommendations from the 2014 Governor's Task Force on Resilience Plan Implementation, and Governor Brown prioritized addressing them in her 2018 resilience policy document. SB 95 addressed them in 2019 but expired in committee due to lack of support.

This is not just a Portland or Metro issue, a Willamette Valley or Western Oregon issue, or anything other than a critical statewide vulnerability for which we have no suitable workarounds. We have no in-state petroleum refineries, and almost all of our gasoline, diesel, and aviation fuel enters and exits through the CEI hub and associated pipelines. We don't have to imagine extended outages affecting wide swaths of our state; we've had our brittle energy infrastructure exposed in the high winds and wildfires of September 2020 and the ice storm of February 2021. A Cascadia Subduction Zone or more localized earthquake would amplify and extend the disruption across the entire state, with substantially more severe and long-lasting effects. Liquid fuels power vehicles for emergency services, commerce, most of the supplies we need on a daily basis, aviation, emergency generators for public safety facilities, emergency communication, hospitals, refrigeration, and almost all of our critical utilities, e.g., water, wastewater, telecommunications, power generation, air, ground and marine transportation.

In addition to fuel end-uses, a large tank failure and release would create catastrophic, long-term environmental impact. Those who live closest to the hub would bear a particular burden, but the entire state depends on the health and availability of the Columbia River as an ecosystem, two-way transportation route, and economic lifeline.

This measure isn't a solution; it's an essential step to provide detailed assessment and prioritized actions to address the range of gaps. We can't start soon enough.

Sincerely,



Jeff Rubin, PhD, CEM
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Vice Chair, Governor's Task Force on Resilience Plan Implementation (2014)