Jay Wilson
Portland, Oregon

February 28, 2024

RE: Testimony to the House Committee on Climate, Energy, and Environment

Hello Chair Marsh and members of the Committee,

My name is Jay Wilson, and although I work as an emergency manager in Clackamas County, I am not representing the County, but speaking from the informed position I held as the past Chair (2014-2017) of the Oregon Seismic Safety Policy Advisory Commission (OSSPAC) in the years after the release of the Oregon Resilience Plan in 2013.

I am honored to be invited to contribute to this discussion on the Oregon CEI Hub, since the location and setting create a concentration of extreme risk to lives and livelihoods. You have heard compelling testimony today about how truly terrible this place will be when the big earthquake happens and I would like to provide some suggested direction.

My ask is that the State of Oregon needs a 2050 vision for a well-managed future transition of the CEI Hub and a mindful approach to how all this current risk will be borne by our children and grandchildren as the clock continues to tick since Oregon's last great earthquake in 1700. The potential for the worst oil spill in US history is something that we ourselves have inherited from the community planners and energy developers over the last one hundred years. It is now on our watch and we cannot kick this can down the road.

This 2050 vision needs to frame the CEI Hub function as an essential measuring point for Oregon's climate change strategy in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and our overall carbon footprint. Right now, the CEI Hub is Not Included in the Oregon's Global Warming Commission's 2035 and 2050 plans. Shouldn't the volume of over 350 million gallons of daily petroleum storage, that we currently use and need, be something we measure as an indicator of meeting our long-term climate goals. Will we need to maintain this same oil storage capacity for the next 30 years?

That leads to two main energy risk issues on CEI Hub storage tanks separate from retrofitting old non-seismic storage tank - decommissioning and decentralization.

Decommissioning older non-utilized or under-utilized tanks is one way to reduce the current level of seismic risk. In fact, it may be a good strategy planning forward to decommission the most seismically vulnerable gasoline and diesel storage tanks at a level commensurate with our estimated reduction of fossil fuel needs based on Oregon's long-term estimates of transitioning to green energy options by 2035 and 2050.

For decentralization - why must we continue to concentrate over 90% of the petroleum storage facilities for the entire state along the lower Willamette River in Portland and adjacent to so many impacted neighborhoods? Why must the oil companies double down and harden in-place their seismically deficient tanks and suffer the potential loss of products and services to their customers? For the sake of earthquake safety and energy security, we should decentralize this risk across the state into regional nodes of oil storage in new state-of-the-seismic code-designed storage tanks that will remain working when the earthquake happens. We already truck this same product from the CEI Hub across the state to distributors. Why can't we have new regional storage facilities to offset this concentration of risk in one of THE WORST locations possible in Oregon to store oil - Liquefaction, earthquake fault, neighborhoods, oil spill, toxic plumes, landslides, wildfire?

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I see these huge challenges as an opportunity, a pivot point, right now, to align and leverage our seismic risk to reach and supplement our climate change goals, our energy security planning, and our need to address environmental justice. There are very real win-wins in the policy alignments of all of these critical issues if we can only craft an inclusive, unifying 2050 policy vision to harness what must be done. I know this is very hard. This is the essence of my 25-year emergency management career to try and change what we already do to mitigate and reduce future risk. In saying that, addressing risk ahead of time is cheaper, more productive, and ultimately empowering, than reacting to a catastrophe and we then have little to no control or options.

Please consider your individual and collective roles in reducing the CEI Hub's seismic risk by helping to frame the future direction and decisions needed for improved public safety, environmental protection, and energy security.

Sincerely,

Jay Wilson

CEI Hub information references:

https://srpntn.com/2019/10/21/cei-hub-google-earth-flyover/

https://srpntn.com/2023/05/18/what-would-a-catastrophic-oil-spill-from-the-cei-hub-after-an-m9-0-earthquake-look-like-on-the-lower-willamette-and-columbia-rivers/

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