

Submitter: Richard Contreras

On Behalf Of:

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

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3450

Chair and Members of the House Emergency Management Committee,

My name is Richard Contreras, and I urge you to take decisive action to protect our communities, economy, and environment from the imminent dangers posed by the Critical Energy Infrastructure (CEI) Hub.

The CEI Hub is a massive fuel storage facility that supplies nearly all of Oregon's liquid fuels and chemicals. Yet, it sits on unstable, liquefiable land in an earthquake zone, with no adequate safeguards to prevent catastrophic spills, fires, or supply disruptions. It is not a question of if disaster will strike, but when. The consequences of inaction would be devastating—not just for Portland, but for the entire state.

The CEI Hub represents one of the greatest environmental and public safety threats in Oregon, yet for too long, we have deferred action, hoping disaster won't strike on our watch. But hope is not a strategy. Experts warn that a Cascadia Subduction Zone earthquake or even a train derailment could unleash an environmental and economic catastrophe—spilling millions of gallons of fuel into the Willamette River, igniting fires, and cutting off essential fuel supplies statewide. The cost of inaction will be measured in lives lost, businesses destroyed, and an untold financial burden on taxpayers. These bills offer a practical, proactive path forward—ensuring accountability, preparedness, and a managed transition that protects both our communities and our economy. The time to act is now.

HB 3450 (CEI Hub Transition Plan) ensures that Oregon moves beyond temporary fixes and develops a comprehensive, benchmarked strategy to safely transition the CEI Hub's operations. It brings together experts, affected communities, and agencies to chart a sustainable and equitable energy future.

HB 2949 (Risk Bond Study) places financial accountability on industry rather than taxpayers. Risk bonding is standard for underground storage tanks nationwide—why should Oregon allow above-ground fuel tanks to remain unprotected?

HB 2152 (Disaster Fuel Reserves) ensures fuel access for emergency responders and communities when—not if—a disaster strikes. Without a geographically diverse fuel security plan, thousands will be stranded without power, heat, or transportation.

HB 2151 (Risk Mitigation Fund Expansion) allows for much-needed federal support to

bolster Oregon's earthquake and disaster preparedness efforts. It ensures that funding is available before disaster strikes, rather than scrambling to recover after the fact.

The status quo is unacceptable. Oregon cannot afford to wait for tragedy to act. These bills offer pragmatic, common-sense solutions that prioritize safety, resilience, and long-term sustainability. I urge you to support them.

Thank you for your time and leadership on this urgent issue.

Sincerely,