

March 4, 2025

To the House Committee on Emergency Management, General Government, and Veterans

Re: HB 2949

My name is Patricia Kullberg and I live in SE Portland, House District 41. I am writing in support of HB 2949 as a necessary first step in mitigating the considerable financial risk to the citizens of Portland that is represented by the CEI Hub.

A long history of fossil fuel disasters tells us that the corporations who are responsible have never paid the full costs of clean-up and environmental restoration. In fact, they usually pay so little, that it can be considered a cost of doing business. The remainder of the costs fall to the public. This means that companies have little incentive to prepare for potential disasters and prevent the worst outcomes.

In the event of a major earthquake, the Portland metro area will experience the kind of environmental disaster that will make the Deep Water Horizon oil spill pale in comparison. The potential loss of life alone, due to explosion, fire and toxic exposure, is unimaginable. Our treasured waterway, the Willamette, will be perhaps irreparably despoiled with significant economic losses and devastation of the local flora and fauna. The costs for clean-up will be astronomical, more than the state and local treasuries can bear.

Risk bonding is one potential mechanism to compel corporations to pay their fair share of disaster clean-up. Perhaps more importantly, it provides an incentive for companies to do everything possible to prevent fuel spillage in the event of disasters like a major earthquake. Risk bonding, however, must be carefully designed to withstand the expected legal machinations by corporations to evade their fiscal responsibilities. That's why a study is necessary to evaluate the types of risk bonding.

There is really no downside to studying this issue beyond the insignificant cost involve. I urge you to support HB 2949.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

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