

6 March 2025

RE: HB 2949 – study of financial assurances for the Critical Energy Infrastructure Hub

Representative Tran, members of the committee,

My name is Dr. Walter Shriner, and I am a scientist and educator, proud Oregonian, and resident of Multnomah County.

I have already provided written testimony in support of all 4 of the CEI hub bills in front of this committee. But I am compelled to write again to voice my strong opposition to the pre-emptive amendment proposed by the Western States Petroleum Association last week for HB 2949, the bill calling for a study of financial assurances.

While the petroleum association may claim that pre-emption is necessary for operational clarity, there is no compelling reason that they could not comply with the first and/or multiple jurisdictions that require financial assurances. Their industry is quite adept at handling regulations from federal, state, and local governments and even from other countries. Furthermore, financial assurances are not a new concept. It is a standard business practice for this industry as well as many others.

Nonetheless, it is no surprise that WiSPA has suggested state pre-emption, because restricting action to the State, and stopping counties and other jurisdictions from developing their own regulations right away, serves WiSPA members in two important ways.

1. First, it kills the efforts of Multnomah County – where the commissioners have been working over the last year to develop an effective and meaningful ordinance requiring financial assurances for operators of tanks in the CEI hub.
2. Second, it delays any implementation of financial assurances for multiple years, providing WiSPA ample opportunity to weaken or kill any state efforts, while not taking any action to harden their facilities today.

Let me be clear, a pre-emption amendment would gut HB 2949. It would be a disaster for the residents of Multnomah County and all Oregonians. You have heard ample testimony on the urgency of action. SB 1567 was a great start, but many of the tank operators are employing the effective strategy of delay, delay, delay.

Multnomah County is on the cusp of passing an ordinance that incentivizes the retrofits required by SB1567 sooner rather than as late as possible. Don't pull the rug out from under the County Commission to appease the very industry that is dragging its feet.

Do not include pre-emptive language in this bill. The residents of the state deserve immediate action, **where and when**, it can be done, while waiting for the State to study and develop its own approach.

It may take a village to raise a child, but it takes all jurisdictions to keep a community safe. I look forward to supporting each of the moves the State, County, and City to make more secure the fuel stores in the CEI hub and throughout Oregon.

Thank you,

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