

Submitter: Lin Woodrich
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Emergency Management and Veterans
Measure, Appointment or HB4100
Topic:

Representative and Committee Members,

My name is Lin Woodrich. I am the co-chair of the Active Bethel Community neighborhood of Eugene, Oregon, a residential community that sits across from the Trainsong neighborhood which is located right next to the Union Pacific rail yard and active rail lines. Like many of my neighbors, I am deeply concerned about the proposed siting of large fuel infrastructure in or near residential areas and the long-term safety implications for our families, our homes, and our city.

I am here to urge support for HB 4100 and HB 4032 because these bills advance critical protections for public safety and responsible energy planning.

First, Oregon must ensure that large fuel facilities have adequate safety and financial safeguards in place before they are allowed to operate. HB 4100 requires bulk fuel operators to obtain a certificate of financial responsibility from DEQ, demonstrating they can cover the full cost of potential spills, leaks, or catastrophic incidents. This concept of accountability is not abstract for us - it's personal. We live with the constant reminder of dioxin contamination infiltrating our groundwater, public open spaces, and backyards as rail-yard plumes and JH Baxter superfund sites were never held accountable prior to poisoning our neighborhood. Adding insult to injury, the Trainsong neighborhood has two impending fuel facilities that are to transport more hazardous materials through our community every day by rail and on our streets. Without strong financial and safety requirements, the burden of cleanup and risk will fall on residents and local governments. Union Pacific and Corp will not be footing the bill. HB 4100 ensures industry is truly responsible for its risks.

Second, HB 4032 helps Oregon plan for distributed, resilient emergency fuel storage across the state rather than concentrating risk in a few dense areas.

Our concerns are not hypothetical. Just yesterday, multiple railroad cars derailed in the Union Pacific yard in Eugene — the third such derailment in just over two weeks — reminding us how real and immediate rail safety issues are. These derailments involved empty cars in a yard that has been operated under contract by a shortline railroad (CORP) rather than directly by Union Pacific crews, raising additional questions about training, oversight, and crew safety practices.

And when corporate rail operations are staffed by non-union workers with varying levels of training and oversight, it can erode the safety culture that unionized crews

have historically upheld. Ensuring that fuel transport and handling adheres to the highest safety standards (not just minimal regulatory compliance) is essential for protecting communities like ours.

While the City of Eugene has taken the proposal for a fuel transfer facility in the Trainsong neighborhood under review, after strong public concerns about health, safety, and zoning, this local action does not eliminate the state-level risk posed by fuel infrastructure located in residential settings. These risks include increased truck traffic, the potential for spills and fire hazards, and added strain on narrow neighborhood streets and emergency services.

HB 4100 and HB 4032 are balanced, commonsense bills that do not stop development but lift the bar for safety and planning. They help protect Oregon families while ensuring that infrastructure planning accounts for risk, resilience, and community health. We need these protections to prevent our neighborhoods from bearing the brunt of industrial risks, especially where people live, work, play, and raise children.

For the safety of families in Trainsong and Bethel, Eugene, Portland, and communities across Oregon, I strongly urge you to support HB 4100 and HB 4032.

Thank you,
Lin Woodrich
Active Bethel Community co-chair
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