



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF OREGON

The League of Women Voters of Oregon is a 97-year-old grassroots nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government. We envision informed Oregonians participating in a fully accessible, responsive, and transparent government to achieve the common good. LWVOR Legislative Action is based on advocacy positions formed through studies and member consensus. The League never supports or opposes any candidate or political party.

March 12, 2017

To: House Committee on Energy & Environment
[Representative Ken Helm](#), Chair
hee.exhibits@oregonlegislature.gov

Re: **HB 2131** – Relating to safe transport of hazardous materials including fossil fuels - **Support**

Since the 1950's, the League of Women Voters has been at the forefront of national efforts to protect air, land and water resources. The League's position is that members work to "Preserve the physical, chemical and biological integrity of the ecosystem, with maximum protection of public health and the environment" and **with a focus on demanding pollution prevention**. Additionally, the League's Social Policy is very clear, "Secure equal rights and equal opportunity for all. Promote social and economic **justice and the health and safety of all Americans.**"

Our testimony in support of HB 2131 is consistent with the League's national position and focus on pollution prevention, rather than just cleanup and post-spill settlements and justice and public safety for all people.

With the production of domestic oil in Montana and North Dakota, increased rail & vessel shipment of crude oil has begun. In many parts of the country record volumes of oil are moving by rail and vessels with multiple spill related accidents. Some major accidents include the Lac-Mégantic Quebec province explosion (>\$3Bil), Mosier Oregon (>\$8M) and Kalamazoo River in Michigan (requiring a five year >\$ 1.4Bil on-going cleanup). Just in the past few years over 32 major FOSSIL FUEL transport/storage related accidents have occurred, including a massive oil rail explosion and aquatic spill in West Virginia.

The Mosier Acts of 2017, House Bill 2131 (sponsored by Rep. Smith Warner) and **Senate Bill 7** (sponsored by Sen. Courtney) would:

- Require contingency plans and training for oil train-related spills;
- Levy fees on railroads to build Oregon's Oil Spill Contingency Fund; and
- Require railroads to have adequate insurance to cover worst-case oil train derailments

This bill will benefit the health and safety of all Oregonians by reducing the risk to our water resources and other hazards, such as explosions (causing air pollution) and other life threatening events.

Because many of the oil transport facilities and infrastructures go through or are located in highly populated areas, the potential for human danger is high. Additionally, the Columbia, Willamette and Deschutes Rivers' fragile eco systems are at risk. We agree with Columbia Gorge Commission and several other groups concerning the priority funding for oil and other related oil products, spill and or explosion prevention, preparedness planning and related funding. It appears these bills address all applicable statues relating to the safe transport of hazardous materials; creating new provisions, amending ORS 468B.300, 468B.340, 468B.345, 468B.355, 468B.360, 468B.365, 468B.385, 468B.390 and 468B.412.

As such, these bills create a comprehensive solution to address applicable Oregon safety regulation and appropriate funding for comprehensive prevention measures, preparedness related education, relevant equipment/machinery requirements, extensive training and other efforts to prevent and prepare for the public/ environmental tragedy that can accompany oil-spill accidents associated with existing insufficient standard vessel and rail transportation and associated storage practices.

The League of Women Voters urges your support of HB 2131

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss this legislation.

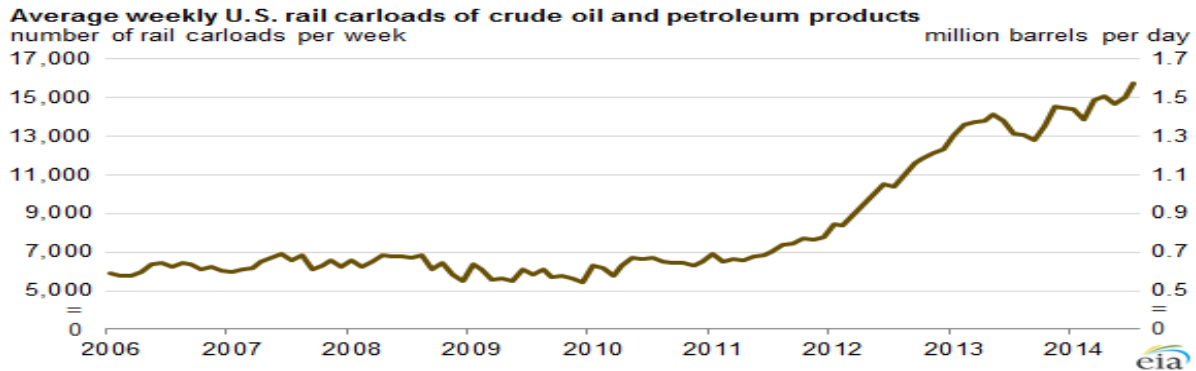


Norman Turrill
LWVOR President

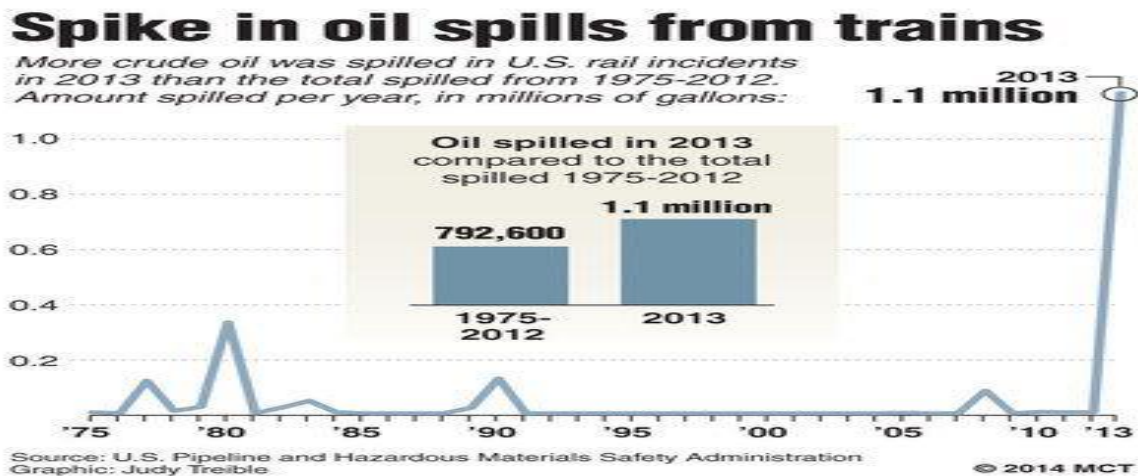


Claudia Keith
Climate Change Policy Portfolio

Supplemental



(Energy Information Administration)





Oil Train Disasters: recent oil train accidents and communities fighting for protections.
Blue lines indicate U.S. major freight rail lines.
<http://earthjustice.org/features/map-crude-by-rail>

The Fraser Institute, a nonprofit think tank based in Canada, found that [rail is “over 4.5 times more likely to experience an occurrence when compared to pipelines.”](#)

Read more here: <http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/nationworld/midwest/ct-iowa-train-derailment-fire-20170311-story.html>

<http://www.sanluisobispo.com/opinion/editorials/article136472098.html#storylink=cpy>

<http://www.nbcnews.com/news/investigations/oil-train-spills-hit-record-level-2014-n293186>

<https://insideclimatenews.org/news/09022017/kalamazoo-river-oli-pipeline-spill-settlement-epa-enbridge-oil-sands>

<https://gorgefriends.org/protect-the-gorge/gorge-issues/oil-train-legislation--the-mosier-acts.html>

<http://www.statesmanjournal.com/story/news/2016/12/04/costs-train-derailment-along-columbia-river-adding-up/94973428/>

<http://www.columbian.com/news/2016/dec/01/mosier-derailments-costs-near-9-million/>

http://www.oregonlive.com/environment/index.ssf/2015/03/for_oregon_4_oil_train_acciden.html-

<http://www.globalresearch.ca/rolling-bombs-crude-oil-rail-tankers-threaten-u-s-canada-populations-environment/5439245>