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To: Members of the Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee on Public Safety

From: Rhett Lawrence, Oregon Chapter Sierra Club

Date: June 27, 2017

RE: House Bill 2131

Co-Chairs Winter and Stark and Members of the Committee: Good afternoon, my name is Rhett Lawrence and I'm the Conservation Director for the Oregon Chapter of the Sierra Club. Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today. On behalf of our more than 20,000 members and supporters in Oregon, I wanted to offer our support for House Bill 2131 and also encourage that it be strengthened with the -2 amendments.

As an organization with a long history working to move beyond fossil fuels in Oregon, we believe that HB 2131 could be a bill worthy of your strong support. We have all seen the devastating impacts of oil train derailments in Mosier, Oregon, last summer and Lac Megantic, Quebec, in 2013. We must take action in our state to prevent further disasters here, and HB 2131 could go a long way toward improving oil train safety in Oregon, which has the weakest laws on the west coast related to those matters. We cannot allow our state to become an unregulated throughway for oil trains.

Unfortunately, though HB 2131 started out as a good bill, it was dramatically weakened in committee to the point of barely being meaningful or enforceable in its current form. For that reason, we urge this committee to adopt the -2 amendments that are similar to Senate Bill 7 currently pending in the Senate. We need to do more to protect Oregon communities and special places like the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area than HB 2131 would do in its current form.

For these reasons, we support House Bill 2131, but we strongly urge the adoption of the -2 amendments. It is time to bring Oregon's laws up to date in protecting the safety of our communities and protecting our environment. Thank you very much for considering my comments and I'd be happy to answer any questions.