

SB 7 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Veterans and Emergency Preparedness

Action Date: 04/18/17

Action: Without recommendation as to passage, request rescission of subsequent referral to Finance and Revenue and request referral to Rules.

Vote: 3-0-1-0

Yeas: 3 - Boquist, Monnes Anderson, Olsen

Exc: 1 - President Courtney

Fiscal: Fiscal impact issued

Revenue: Revenue impact issued

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WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Directs Environmental Quality Commission to adopt rules imposing oil spill prevention and emergency response planning on high hazard train routes. Requires proof of financial responsibility from railroad owners or operators. Assesses \$375,000 annually, divided among certain railroads.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Moving measure to another committee without recommendation

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

On June 6, 2014, an Emergency Order issued by the United States Department of Transportation went into effect requiring railroad carriers operating trains transporting 1,000,000 gallons or more of Bakken crude oil via a single train to provide information to the State Emergency Response Commission on estimated volumes and frequencies of implicated train traffic.

In 2015, the Oregon Legislative Assembly enacted House Bill 3225 which required the Office of State Fire Marshal to adopt a plan for coordinated response to an oil or other hazardous material spill or release that could occur during rail transport.

In June of 2016, a train shipping crude oil derailed near the small city of Mosier in the Columbia River Gorge. Eleven cars from the 96-car train left the rails around noon, near Rock Creek, which feeds the Columbia River. Several cars caught fire and some oil was released. Interstate 84 was closed in both directions and a community school and others were evacuated. The event brought preexisting concerns about crude oil transport into sharp focus: the potential risk to people and property; the value of Oregon's natural landscape, wildlife and water resources; the differences in fire behavior and the type of firefighting required to combat volatile and potentially explosive fuel; how the time of day, weather conditions and other factors influenced the outcome; and local and state resources and capacities to combat such hazards.

Senate Bill 7 requires oil spill prevention and emergency response planning to be imposed on high hazard train routes by the Environmental Quality Control Commission and assesses \$375,000 annually, proportioned among certain railroads.