



PORTLAND FIRE & RESCUE



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February 11, 2020
Representative Karin Power
House Committee on Energy and Environment
900 Court Street, NE, Salem, OR 97301

Chair Power and Members of the Committee,

My name is Sara Boone and I am Chief of Portland Fire & Rescue. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 4105.

As Chief of Oregon's largest fire and emergency service provider, my primary concern is community safety. Due to the density of the City of Portland, trains loaded with high-hazard flammable products travel near schools, neighborhoods, and through the downtown area. We are as prepared as a jurisdiction can be. However, there is more we can and should do to review the risk.

Accidents of trains carrying crude oil have resulted in devastating explosions and uncontrollable fires – including the 2016 train derailment in Mosier, Oregon, where the resulting fire caused the evacuation of nearly one-quarter of the town's residents. Another infamous example is the 2013 accident in Lac-Mégantic, Quebec, where a derailed train destroyed the downtown area, killing 47 people.

This bill provides advance notice to the Department of Transportation when facilities unload oil or gas received by rail. With trains carrying up to 3 million gallons of combustible product pass through the City of Portland, the more information provided to the Department of Transportation and the State Fire Marshal, the better.

If oil transportation increases, this bill also prohibits facilities from loading or unloading oil or gas with vapor pressure of nine pounds per square inch or more. State Attorney Generals from New York, California, Illinois, Maine, Maryland, and Washington have all argued that reducing crude oil vapor pressure to levels below nine pounds per square inch is necessary to minimize the danger of transporting crude oil by rail. Notably, the previously mentioned rail fires in Mosier, Oregon and Quebec both involved trains with vapor pressure exceeding 9.0 psi.

On behalf of Portland Fire & Rescue and the City of Portland I urge you to support advance notice of facilities unloading oil or gas, and to prohibit facilities from loading or loading oil or gas with vapor pressure of nine pounds per square inch or more.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input and I look forward to staying engaged in this process.

Sara Boone
Chief of Portland Fire & Rescue