

Submitter: Diane Meisenhelter

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Energy and Environment

Measure: SB1567

My name is Diane Meisenhelter and I'm a trained NET and volunteer emergency responder in my NE neighborhood in Portland and also volunteer with the NAACP Environmental Justice committee. Almost a decade ago, when being trained, I was extremely concerned by the response of fire management officials to questions I raised about city resources and personnel being siphoned off to focus on the CEI HUB across the river in NW Portland in the event of an earthquake. I continued to raise this issue with City officials while protesting against Zenith Oil's hazardous operations. The issuance of the Seismic safety policy advisory Commission's report confirmed our worse fears that we are potentially facing a catastrophe on the scale of Deep Water Horizon or Fukushima.

I would strongly urge you to support SB1567 as a first step in the right direction with requirements for seismic vulnerability assessments as well as an Energy Security Plan. As we have seen from the past mistakes by Zenith, it is important that the safety assessments and safety protocol drills actually relate to ALL of the specific materials ever on site at the facility. It is also critical that we start to consider sufficient set-backs from residential areas and natural resources (such as forests and waterways) as well as addressing underlying ground water issues. Eventually we need to begin a transition process of not allowing facilities in liquefaction zones and phasing out dangerous fossil fuels altogether. As we have seen in other parts of the country, taxpayers should not have to pay the price for irresponsible practices by companies who do not care about the preventable harms they are creating for both people and planet. Finally, I believe it would make the bill both stronger and more effective to clarify that as part of their assessment, companies must demonstrate being in alignment with state policies such as the Climate Protection Program and SCR17, the Environmental Justice Framework. Thanks so much to those who worked on this very important first step legislation and I hope this committee is able to do all within your power to move it forward to be passed in this short session.