



To: House Committee on Emergency Management, General Government, and Veterans

From: Chief Brian Stewart
Clackamas Fire District
Oregon Fire Chiefs Association

Chief Ben Stange
Polk County Fire District No. 1
SDAO Fire Districts

Date: March 4, 2025

**Re: HB 2384 – Testimony in Support –
Continued Funding Hazardous Materials Training and Preparedness –
Crude Oil by Rail**

Chair Tran, Vice-Chair Grayber, Vice-Chair Lewis and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the **Oregon Fire Chiefs Association** and the **Special Districts of Oregon Fire Districts**, we offer our strong support of HB 2384 with the adoption of the dash 1 amendment. This bill ensures continued funding for hazardous materials (HazMat) training and preparedness related to crude oil rail transport.

The \$19 per-car Loaded Tank Railroad Car Fee funds the Oregon State Fire Marshal’s (OSFM) HazMat Rail Training Specialist position, which provides essential training for first responders. Since HB 2209 in 2019, Oregon has followed a triennial training cycle, including tabletop and full-scale exercises. The next tabletop exercise, scheduled for April 2 in Klamath Falls, involves collaboration with local fire departments, OSFM’s Regional HazMat Response Team, emergency managers, the Department of Environmental Quality, and major rail operators.

This program has significantly improved safety, particularly in rural communities. The training specialist has provided critical instruction to fire agencies, assisted in local drills, ensured new HazMat Technicians receive proper rail response training, and created training resources for volunteer firefighters.

The current sunset date of January 2, 2027, could disrupt these efforts before they are fully realized. Extending the fee until mid-2029 ensures uninterrupted training and preparedness. As emergency response requires continuous investment, this bill is vital to keeping Oregonians safe.

Thank you for your time and consideration.