

PORT OF OLYMPIA COMMISSION
Resolution 2014-07

A resolution expressing the deep concern of the Port of Olympia about the threat to life, safety, the environment and economic development due to accidents, potential spills and explosions posed by the current and future transport of North Dakota Bakken crude oil through our county and requesting the Port of Grays Harbor Commission to reconsider the siting of the three oil terminals at the Port and requesting the City of Hoquiam not to approve the construction of the three oil terminals.

WHEREAS, new technologies and the current higher price of oil/barrel have resulted in the extraction of unprecedented amounts of crude oil from the Bakken shale formation in North Dakota now estimated to extract one million barrels/day; and,

WHEREAS, oil company plans to expand the rail capacity in the State of Washington to both receive this crude oil at four refineries and at newly proposed marine transfer stations at the Ports of Vancouver and Grays Harbor will greatly increase the number of oil trains traveling through our county; and,

WHEREAS, these unit oil trains composed of 100 to 150 tankers filled with Bakken crude oil now travel through Thurston County towns of Bucoda, Tenino and Lacey on BNSF lines headed north and might travel through Rochester along the Chehalis river west on Genesee & Wyoming lines to three proposed marine transfer terminals at the Port of Grays Harbor; and,

WHEREAS, catastrophic explosion, spills and death due to derailments of tankers carrying Bakken crude oil have occurred in Lac Megantic, Quebec, Casselton, North Dakota, New Brunswick, Canada, Aliceville, Alabama and Lynchburg, Virginia within the last year and could occur in our towns, on our farm lands and in our river systems posing a serious threat to Thurston County and its economic viability, as well as our pristine wilderness; and,

WHEREAS, between April 29th and May 21st 2014, there have been four derailments on the Genesee and Wyoming rail line between Centralia and Aberdeen that raise serious questions about the capability of this rail line to handle current export commodities, let alone 150 car unit trains of explosive Bakken oil; and,

WHEREAS, the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration ("PMSHA") has determined this Bakken crude oil may be more flammable than traditional crude oil; and,

WHEREAS, the vast majority (78,000 out of 92,000) of the tank cars used in the transport of this explosive Bakken crude oil through our county are DOT-111s which have been known to puncture upon impact since 1991; and,

WHEREAS, in January 2014, the National Transportation Safety Board stated "Because there is no mandate for railroads to develop comprehensive plans or ensure the availability of necessary response resources, carriers have effectively placed the burden of remediating the environmental consequences of an accident on local communities along the route"; and,

WHEREAS, at the same time this burden to protect our urban centers, farm lands, river systems, the economic viability, and our natural environment from oil trains is being placed on local jurisdictions such as the Port of Olympia, many local jurisdictions are struggling to maintain their Fire Fighters and First Responders, let alone provide them with adequate resources to respond to oil fires, explosions and derailments; and,

WHEREAS, on June 2, 2014, the City Council of the City of Vancouver passed a resolution opposing the proposed oil terminal at the Port of Vancouver and opposing the movement of these Bakken crude oil tanker trains through their city;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Commission of the Port of Olympia asks the Port of Grays Harbor Commissioners to reconsider its proposal to build three marine transfer terminals for this volatile Bakken shale oil which will result in this Bakken oil being transported on DOT 111s through our urban centers and farm areas and endangering the health, safety, welfare and economic viability of our citizens and the natural environment that supports all our domestic livestock and wildlife.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Commission of the Port of Olympia strongly requests the City of Hoquiam to deny construction permits for all three of these proposed oil terminals which will result in this Bakken oil being transported on DOT 111s through our urban centers and farm areas and endangering the health, safety, welfare, the economic viability of our citizens and the natural environment that supports our domestic livestock and wildlife.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Commission of the Port of Olympia strongly urges the Washington Department of Transportation and the Freight Mobility Strategic Investment Board to analyze and study the potential economic effect of this oil train traffic on the displacement of existing economic activity and the potential loss of access to rail transport by local and regional shippers.


BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Commission of the Port of Olympia requests that Governor Inslee carefully consider whether the use of our state's rail system for the pass through transport of this explosive Bakken crude oil for export is in the public interest of our state, its economy, its citizens, as well as the domestic livestock and wildlife.

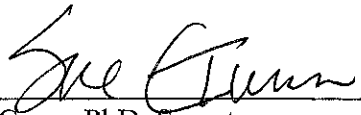
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Commission of the Port of Olympia also requests that Governor Inslee, in accordance with the 1989 Centennial Accord between the federal recognized Indian Tribes and the State of Washington, work directly with those Tribes, such as the Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation, the Nisqually Tribe, the Squaxin Island Tribe, and the Quinault Indian Nation to protect tribal treaty rights and fishing resources which appear to be threatened by proposed oil terminals, expanding oil refineries, and routing through Tribal territories of crude oil unit trains from the Bakken region of North Dakota and the tar sands of Northern Alberta, Canada.

ADOPTED by the Port Commission of the Port of Olympia this 25th day of August 2014.

PORT OF OLYMPIA COMMISSION

Bill McGregor, President


George Barner, Jr., Vice President


Sue Gunn, PhD, Secretary