

Eric LaBrant

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Good afternoon. I'm Eric LaBrant, I'm a commissioner at the Port of Vancouver but I'm here today on my own behalf and not in that capacity. I just wanted to share a couple of thoughts in terms of how aggressive and complete the plans are that are being required. I just want to point out oil from the Exxon Valdez is still being found. Also wanted to make sure to mention the air components, I think that has been touched on by a couple of previous commenters but the air impacts to potential spills whether that is from the spill itself which can give off hydrogen sulfide, volatile organic compounds, various carcinogenic compounds, those can have of course impacts to wildlife but also to human health for those who may be living nearby. Also of course we have seen a number of cases where oil spills do ignite. So that can change the composition of what is going into the air in those situations. Also I wanted to mention potential water and land impacts. You know we are focusing on, I've seen some focus on water, but groundwater, I know that's near and dear to Ecology's heart and certainly mine as well. I actually live on top of a groundwater cleanup site presently and so that's top of mind for me as a resident. And you know so I want to make sure that the response, whatever those responses are that in those plans they adequately respond to human health impacts. Also wanted to make sure that there's some thought given to, or some consideration given to the use of shipping lanes and you know, we use quite a bit of hydropower here in Washington. Those two uses in particular of our waterways are critical and 24-hour requirements for response need to take that into consideration, that we need to have access to shipping lanes and to our hydroelectric power as quickly as possible. There's some serious downstream impacts to any kind of delay in use of those. I would also like to see strong consideration given for response capacity in ecologically sensitive areas, certainly some locations where oil might spill are potentially more or less sensitive than others, so we want to make sure that gets built into any planning that gets done. Someone, a previous commentor mentioned the orcas as one example those would be especially sensitive to any potential negative impacts. So it would make sense to make sure that there is extra cleanup capacity quickly available to prevent those kind of impacts and finally, last but not least, I wanted to talk a little bit about the financial responsibility piece. During the Q&A we heard a little bit about PCB cleanup and how ultimately that ended up going back toward a state fund. Other oil spills we have seen where a company, an initial party may file bankruptcy, insurance companies that may try to file bankruptcy or sort of take a hands-off approach to their responsibility so whether that is in the form of a bond or some sort of prepaid approach what I would like to see as a taxpayer is to not have spill response ultimately the financial responsibility laid at the feet of the taxpayers. When entities go out of business, go bankrupt, walk away, whatever approach gets taken. I'm glad that Washington state has the capacity financially to try and address some of these things, but it doesn't seem appropriate for the risk to be socialized unless the profits from these projects are also being socialized. Thank you.