

Western States Petroleum Association

Thank you very much. My name is Antonio Machado and I am a representative of the Western States Petroleum Association, a trade group that advocates for companies providing energy for transportation. We really appreciate this opportunity to express our unwavering commitment to prioritizing safety and the protection of the environment as we produce energy. The dedicated workers in the energy industry whom I represent today play a crucial role in producing energy in the state of Washington. We deeply value the natural resources surrounding us, including me as I live in Whatcom County, and are firmly committed to preserving and safeguarding them for our children and future generations. Over the years, our industry has learned from past incidents and invested significant resources and continuous improvement. Throughout the last 3 decades, we have implemented substantial measures to minimize environmental harm while producing and transporting the energy essential for sustaining the economic vitality of our region. As an industry, we have actively engaged in enhancing and adopting international, federal and other standards. We have bolstered vessel monitoring and inspections and collaborated with regulatory agencies. We have adopted oil handling standards and spill prevention measures, improved preparedness and response assistance capabilities and navigation technology while also prioritizing crew competency. Our members adhere to strict policies and procedures ensuring both safety and efficiency in their operations. We believe in being prepared in any case and for any event. We currently maintain higher than ever emergency response safety stockpiles and conduct regular drills to prepare for any contingency. Proactively, we utilize double hulled vessels to mitigate spill risks. The improved material strength of our vessels significantly minimizes the potential for spills. We have enhanced tug designs and support and emergency response tug vessel. While it has not been used to deter oil spill potential, it has provided aid to other vessels and other industries or services. Additionally, our industry boasts the best safety record of the past 2 decades. As noted by the Harbor Safety Committee, making our waters here in the Pacific Northwest the safest and navigable waters in the United States. In closing, WSPA fully supports ongoing efforts to improve safety and environmental protection. Producing energy is a complex, demanding, and challenging process. WSPA and its members believe that no job or task takes precedence over protecting the environment and the safety of our workers and community. We believe that the proposed financial responsibility amounts in the agency's proposed rule language provide appropriate protections given the significant improvements in the industry over the last decades and considering technological advancements. We commend the agency for its efforts and we reaffirm our unwavering that dedication to supporting the rulemaking process and maintaining a focus on environmental stewardship and safety. Thank you very much.