



JEFF KRUSE
STATE SENATOR
REPUBLICAN WHIP
District 1

223418
223419

COMMITTEES:

Vice-Chair
Health & Human
Services
Education & General
Government
Member
Special Commission on
Health Care Reform
Health Policy &
Public Affairs
Judiciary

AB-515 Sub 2
FD-35160

FOR THE RECORD I AM SENATOR JEFF KRUSE REPRESENTING OREGON SENATE DISTRICT ONE WHICH COVERS ALL OR PARTS OF FIVE COUNTIES IN SOUTH WESTERN OREGON. NATURAL RESOURCES AND THE ABILITY TO GET THEM TO MARKET IS THE LIFE BLOOD OF MY COMMUNITIES. I WANT TO THANK THE STB FOR HOLDING THIS HEARING AS THE ISSUE IS VITAL TO OUR FUTURE.

I JOIN MY COLLEAGUES IN URGING THAT THE BOARD KEEP THE LINE INTACT. THE 20 MILE SECTION OF THE LINE FROM DANEBE TO VAUGHN SHOULD NOT BE BROKEN OFF THE MAIN LINE.

I ALSO OPPOSE THE CORP'S APPLICATION TO ABANDON THE LINE AND SUPPORT THE PORT OF COOS BAY'S FEEDER LINE APPLICATION.

IT IS CRITICAL TO THE ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FUTURE OF THIS REGION THAT THE COOS BAY LINE BE BROUGHT BACK INTO OPERATION.

MAKING THE REGION'S ECONOMY WORK AND MAINTAINING THE QUALITY OF LIFE WITHOUT THE COOS BAY LINE WILL BE EXTREMELY DIFFICULT.

THE COASTAL AREAS OF COOS, DOUGLAS AND LANE COUNTIES ARE COMPRISED OF A VERY NARROW FLAT BAND AT THE BASE OF THE COAST RANGE OF MOUNTAINS. BECAUSE OF THE OCEAN STORMS, AND THE GEOLOGY OF THE COAST RANGE, THE AREA IS PRONE TO SLIDES AND ROAD CLOSURES, ESPECIALLY IN THE WINTER RAINY SEASON. FOR THIS REASON, INCREASING THE CAPACITY OF THE COASTAL HIGHWAY IS A DIFFICULT TASK THAT THE STATE AND COUNTIES HAVE SPENT, AND CONTINUE TO SPEND, MUCH MONEY ON.

THE COASTAL STATE HIGHWAY (HWY 101) IS THE MAIN STREET OF ALL THE SMALL TOWNS IT PASSES THROUGH, AS IS TYPICAL OF MOST OF SMALL TOWN AMERICA. SO, NOT ONLY IS THIS HIGHWAY THE MAIN NORTH SOUTH TRANSPORTATION ROUTE FOR THE REGION, IT IS ALSO A MAJOR COMMERCIAL AREA AND WELL USED LOCAL ACCESS ROAD IN OUR RURAL COMMUNITIES.

FURTHER, THE GEOGRAPHY OF SOUTHWEST OREGON, ESPECIALLY IN THE COAST MOUNTAIN RANGE, IS ONE OF NARROW, STEEP SIDED VALLEYS. THERE ARE THREE MAIN HIGHWAYS THAT CONNECT THE COAST WITH THE I-5 IN THE CENTRAL VALLEY. ALL THREE LATERAL CONNECTORS WIND THROUGH THE COAST RANGE MOUNTAINS. AGAIN, THESE HIGHWAYS FORM THE MAIN STREETS OF ALL THE LOCAL COMMUNITIES THEY PASS THROUGH, PRESENTING THE SAME ISSUES WITH LOCAL COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL TRAFFIC. THEY ARE ALSO SUBJECT TO GEOLOGIC INSTABILITY, ESPECIALLY IN THE WINTER RAINY SEASON, WHEN IT IS COMMON FOR SLIDES AND FLOODING TO CLOSE THE ROAD.

THERE IS NO OTHER RAIL LINK TO THE REGION.



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IF THE COOS BAY LINE IS ABANDONED, ALL OF THE TRAFFIC THAT NOW FLOWS IN AND OUT OF THE REGION ON TRAINS WILL BE TRANSFERRED TO TRUCKS. THE SUBSTANTIAL ADDITIONAL NUMBER OF TRUCKS HAS BEEN WELL DOCUMENTED IN THE FILINGS TO THE STB.

THERE ARE NO FOUR LANE ROADS SERVING THE REGION. ALL OF THE RURAL COMMUNITIES ARE SERVED BY WINDING 2 LANE ROADS.

WE ARE TALKING ABOUT THE ADDITION A GREAT MANY MORE HEAVY, NOISY, AND VERY LARGE TRUCKS, CAUSING SUBSTANTIALLY MORE WEAR AND TEAR, AND POLLUTION, THAN PASSENGER CARS.

ESPECIALLY TO OUR RURAL COMMUNITIES, THIS INCREASED TRUCK TRAFFIC PRESENTS SERIOUS SAFETY AND QUALITY OF LIFE ISSUES.

WITHIN THE FOREST PRODUCTS INDUSTRY, IT IS A COMMONLY UNDERSTOOD THAT IT TAKES FROM 3 TO 4 TRUCKS TO HAUL WHAT CAN BE HAULED ON ONE RAIL CAR.

THE ADDITIONAL FUEL TO RUN RAW MATERIAL AND FINISHED GOODS IS VERY SIGNIFICANT, THE ADDITIONAL POLLUTION GENERATED FROM THAT FUEL IS SIGNIFICANT; THE ADDITIONAL TRAFFIC THAT WILL BE CLOGGING THE MAIN STREETS OF OUR COMMUNITIES IS SIGNIFICANT.

I URGE THE STB TO CONSIDER THE IMPACT ON THE RURAL COMMUNITIES OF ABANDONING THE LINE. THIS IS AN ASSET THAT IS CLEARLY MORE VALUABLE OPERATING: HELPING MAINTAIN OUR MANUFACTURING JOB BASE, THE ECONOMIC VIABILITY OF OUR COMMUNITIES, AND OUR RURAL WAY OF LIFE.

AGAIN, I THANK THE STB FOR THIS OPPORTUNITY TO SPEAK AND I WELCOME ANY QUESTIONS.

THANK YOU.


SENATOR JEFF KRUSE