



**REPRESENTATIVE MARK JOHNSON
OREGON HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
HOUSE DISTRICT 52**

**For Immediate Release
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Representative Mark Johnson Votes To Increase Rail Safety In Oregon
*House Unanimously Passes HB 3225 To Help Protect Oregon Communities From Hazardous
Material Spills*

Salem, OR – Representative Mark Johnson (R-Hood River) crafted, sponsored and successfully passed HB 3225 and the Collaborative Rail Safety Agreement, legislation placing the Oregon State Fire Marshal (OSFM) in charge of coordinating training exercises of first responders and ensuring they have the tools to protect communities from hazardous material spills. Union Pacific (UP), Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF), and Portland and Western (P&W) will voluntarily provide equipment at seven key locations across Oregon and assist in the coordination of drills and training.

“I feel very good about what we have been able to accomplish. This is an important step forward for rail safety and improving the response to any incidents that may occur,” said Rep. Johnson. “Through this measure, the OSFM will ensure that first responders are trained, have the tools they need in case of an emergency, and can identify gaps in the state’s ability to respond. This package is the start to a strong relationship between industry and the state to keep the safety of Oregonians at the forefront.”

UP, BNSF, and P&W will provide seven regional support flatbed trailers, scholarships for Oregon first responders to attend training, additional equipment for training purposes, and critical support for first response units that do not have the budget for costs associated with attending trainings. The OSFM will continue in an ongoing collaboration with the railroad industry. While federal law prevents states from controlling materials transported across state lines, it is imperative that first responders are prepared for any incident that may occur.

“As a state representative in the Columbia River Gorge region, I’m glad that we can now put a plan into action to provide better public safety and natural resource protection,” continued Rep Johnson. “The City of Hood River has expressed concerns regarding rail safety and I believe HB 3225 puts into place strong procedures and protocols to address those concerns.”

HB 3225 passed the House 59-0 and the Senate 24-6. The bill now goes to the Governor’s desk for signage.

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