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## Environment Committee

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### SJM 8015

**Brief Description:** Requesting Congress implement certain increased safety measures for tank rail cars.

**Sponsors:** Senators O'Ban, Rolfes, Ericksen, Ranker, Sheldon, Benton, Baumgartner, Schoesler, Braun, Fain, Parlette, Holmquist Newbry, Chase, Kohl-Welles, Frockt and Kline.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Brief Summary of Bill</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Requests that the United States Congress toughen safety standards for new tank rail cars used to transport hazardous materials, and to require the retrofit or phasing out of tank rail cars currently used to transport hazardous materials.</li></ul>
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**Hearing Date:** 2/25/14

**Staff:** Jacob Lipson (786-7196).

**Background:**

Federal statutes direct the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) to establish various regulations pertaining to the transportation of materials in commerce, including hazardous materials transported by rail. Two agencies within the USDOT have responsibility for aspects of the safety of tank rail cars used to transport hazardous materials:

- The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) is generally responsible for enforcing federal laws and regulations pertaining to railroad safety, including laws pertaining to trains transporting hazardous materials.
- The Pipeline and Hazardous Material Safety Administration (PHMSA) has specific responsibility for regulations pertaining to the safe and secure transportation of hazardous materials used in commerce.

Federal statute directs PHMSA hazardous material safety regulations to achieve several purposes, including ensuring that hazardous materials are packaged and handled safely. The PHMSA regulations establish various requirements for the rail transport of explosive materials,

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gasses, flammable liquids, and other hazardous materials. These regulations include design specifications for the rail cars used to transport hazardous materials.

**Summary of Bill:**

The Legislature requests that Congress toughen existing standards for new tank rail cars. The Legislature also requests that Congress require that the existing tank rail cars currently used to transport potentially hazardous materials be retrofitted with advanced safety technologies or phased out of service.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.