

NEWS

FROM U.S. REPRESENTATIVE

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April 15, 2011

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DEFAZIO SECURES ADDITIONAL FUNDS FOR COOS BAY RAIL LINE

WASHINGTON, D.C.— Today, Congressman Peter DeFazio (D-Springfield) announced that \$2.5 million in federal funding has been made available to the Port of Coos Bay for the rehabilitate and repair the Coos Bay Rail Line. The restoration of this rail line is vital to the health of the coastal economy. These funds will be used by the Port to purchase additional railroad ties so traffic on the line can move at increased speeds allowing shippers to move loads faster and in a more cost-efficient manner.

DeFazio had previously secured \$5 million for the development of short-haul intermodal projects in Oregon in the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU). The funds made available to the Port of Coos Bay came from these SAFETEA-LU funds.

“This is great news for Coos Bay,” DeFazio said. “These funds will help improve the Coos Bay rail line, put people back to work, and ensure area businesses can get their goods to market in a safe and cost-effective manner. These funds help us meet this goal sooner.”

BACKGROUND

The Coos Bay Rail Line was embargoed by the Central Oregon and Pacific Railroad (CORP), a subsidiary of Fortress/RailAmerica, in September 2007. The embargo resulted in the loss of hundreds of jobs and negatively impacted businesses in Southwest Oregon. Since CORP embargoed the Coos Bay Rail Line, DeFazio has worked with the Port of Coos Bay, and state, and local shippers to get the line reopened.

In 2008, DeFazio testified before the Federal Surface Transportation Board and requested they approve the Port’s application to force the sale of the line to the Port from CORP. In March 2009, DeFazio also secured \$8 million in federal funds to help the Port buy the rail line.

Later, DeFazio requested the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) award \$13.5 million in competitive grant funds to finish repairs on the Coos Bay Rail Line. The DOT fast-tracked the response and obligated the funding to the Port.