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Testimony in favor on HB 3114

Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources

Submitted by Amelia Porterfield, Senior Policy Advisor

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB 3114, which invests in Oregon's ocean health, education, and knowledge of acidification and hypoxia.

The Nature Conservancy (TNC) is a science-based and non-partisan conservation organization dedicated to protecting the lands and waters on which all life depends. TNC was incorporated in Oregon in 1961, and today has over 80,000 supporters statewide with members in every county in Oregon.

SB 3114 provides a crucial investment in Oregon's ocean and estuaries, and thereby provides urgently needed support to our coastal communities. The activities supported in this bill are the result of years of effort made by many participants on task forces, studies, and initiatives to pinpoint high areas of investment. Specifically, this bill would fund significant progress on the recommendations of the Oregon Coordinating Council on Ocean Acidification and Hypoxia, the Oregon Shellfish Task Force, the Oregon Ocean Science Trust, and the Science and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) of the Oregon Ocean Policy Advisory Council (OPAC).

In addition to staff participation in many of these groups, TNC provides on-the-ground assistance in monitoring ocean acidification in two of the marine reserves and provides that data to Oregon State University and others to inform time series analyses and other studies. Based on our involvement, we believe that the research and on-the-ground projects in this bill are important and merit funding. In addition, this bill provides the first allocation of state funds to the Oregon Ocean Science Trust and fulfills a long-term vision of the Legislature and the coastal communities they represent.

We express our appreciation to Representatives Gomberg, Brock-Smith and Wright, and their Senate co-sponsors, for their interest in ocean acidification and their strong commitment to the Oregon Coast. Taken together, this package supports robust science and assessments to monitor ocean and estuary health and will help ensure Oregon's iconic species – Dungeness crab, pink shrimp, salmon and more – are resilient long into the future for our seafood industry, coastal economies and our natural environment.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments.