

Sams Valley Elementary
14235 Table Rock Road
Central Point, Oregon 97502

Joint Committee on Ways & Means
Subcommittee on Natural Resources
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

March 29, 2021

Dear Senator Kathleen Taylor, Representative Jeff Reardon and members of the Committee,

The South Slough National Estuarine Research Reserve is located in the Coos estuary where it provides valuable public recreation and learning opportunities for Oregon residents and visitors, as well as conducts important monitoring and research to better understand and manage coastal watersheds and estuaries.

I am pleased to support Senate Bill 5539 because it provides necessary operational funding for the Department of State Lands, including the South Slough National Estuarine Research Reserve.

For over 20 years, I have been bringing students to the South Slough National Estuarine Reserve. This has become an invaluable part of my classroom curriculum. We spend several weeks learning about the biodiversity, ecology and treasures of this special place. Students then apply this knowledge through hands-on/minds-on activities at the Slough. This field experience is part of a 3-day Coast exploration trip that has impacted over 600 Oregon students in 4th and 5th grade from my class. I often hear from former students many years later how this trip to the South made a lasting impression on them and their lives.

I strongly encourage the Committee to pass SB 5536 to continue support of the South Slough Reserve and its important work.

Sincerely,

Raymond L. Jenkins III