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March 25, 2021
RE: SB 826 Support

Dear Committee Members:

I write in support of SB 826. As a fourth generation Astorian, I have seen firsthand the capabilities of the SV Salvage Chief, (Chief). As an engineer, while acting as engineering manager for Exxon during the Exxon Valdez oil spill, I witnessed the unique and timely role that the Chief played in the earliest days of the grounding of the Exxon Valdez. I also recall many of the exploits of the Chief and her crew in the rescue and salvage of vessels, run-hard-aground on the West Coast and on our own Columbia River Bar.

The Chief is not an old vessel ready for the scrap heap nor should it be put into moorage for tourists to enjoy, at least not yet. The Chief is a first on-the-scene responder, capable of achieving emergency work like no other vessel. As we have seen in the present-day situation in the Suez Canal, high powered tugs, designed to pull the largest vessels afloat, cannot budge the grounded mega-ship because they cannot produce the inline bollard pull necessary. The Chief works totally differently than today's tugs. It can pull with much greater force through the use of massive anchors which they deploy from the bow and stern as necessary. With super high-pull capacity winches onboard, the Chief acts as a go between the stranded vessel and the deployed anchors to provide tremendous inline force directed to the vessel in distress. Additionally, it is a great fireboat and command center.

The Chief is in need of some updates and improvements, that once made, will provide our state with a one-of-a-kind response vessel at a small fraction of the cost of building anything close to a vessel as versatile. Please do not be short sighted, all federal and state emergency agencies, including the US Army Corps of Engineers are taking the Cascadia event seriously and this one looming event is reason enough for Oregon to take advantage of preserving the capabilities of the Chief.

Please support SB 826

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