Oregon's Seaport... Port of Coos Bay

OREGON INTERNATIONAL
Port of Coos Bay

Good afternoon, Co-Chairs Girod and Holvey and members of the Subcommittee on Capital Construction.

My name is John Burns, and I serve as the CEO of the Oregon International Port of Coos Bay, and I thank you for your time and consideration

Today, I would like to discuss the initiatives at the Port and what has developed as opportunities to create employment and strengthen the state's economy through trade and commerce. The Port is not the only party that sees the tremendous potential within the Coos Bay Harbor. In the fall of 2021, we entered a MOU with Northpoint Development, Inc. to create a Public Private Partnership which will construct and operate Coos Bay EcoPort and Railway Corridor. EcoPort's goal is to create 2 first in the United States. To be the first Container Port serviced totally by rail and to be the first totally electric port. EcoPort ties into the future of renewable energy, as we are also the most logical Port location to service the Offshore Wind Energy sector on the Oregon Coast and Northern California.

EcoPort and Railway Corridor will account for an estimated 300 new jobs at the terminal facility in Coos Bay and on the Railroad that services the container terminal alone, and many more jobs through the state to support this venture. This project will bring not only jobs and tax revenue to the state, once up and running it is estimated that by redirecting container ship traffic to this facility will result in a reduction of 780,000 metric tons of carbon emissions per year.

In order to make Coos Bay EcoPort and Railway Corridor a reality, as well as optimize the full potential of Offshore Wind Energy, we must complete the work to deepen and widen the Coos Bay Navigation Channel. Without a channel that is 45' deep and 450' wide, the economics of ships coming to Coos Bay will not work out. The same holds true for Offshore Wind Energy, the economics of the projects and the resulting energy cost will be greatly impacted.

The Port is seeking $15 million dollars this biennium to pay for the completion of the design and engineering work as well as conducting the Environmental Impact Study so we can restart our work which we have on pause due to funding.

This design, engineering, and EIS work is the final steps in the US Army Corps of Engineers permitting process, and we need to fund and complete this work to have the navigation channel ready and available to dove tail with the new terminal.

The construction cost of the channel deepening and widening is estimated at $450 million. The Port is working with our federal delegation to secure approximately $400 million in federal funding for this project. In addition to the $15 million for the engineering, we are trying to show a state commitment to the construction of the project in a future biennium. We will be requesting $40 million as a match to the federal funds.

To be clear, our immediate need in this biennium is $15 million to restart and completed permitting. To construct the channel, we will need to provide the $40 million match in a future biennium.

Thank you for your time today, with your help we are one step closer to our goal of meshing together economic development and opportunity, with 21st century environmentally conscious infrastructure – I'm happy to answer any questions.

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