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On Behalf Of: Northwest Oregon Works

Committee: House Committee On Economic Development and Small Business

Measure: HB2909

Northwest Oregon Woks is the Local Workforce Development Board serving Clatsop, Columbia, Tillamook and Lincoln Counties all coastal fishing communities and all four of these counties contain a port. The design of this training program leverages support and expertise from seafood harvesters, processors, retailers, and fisheries and natural resource researchers, who share the goal of developing a robust and effective curriculum. Local economic markets are in need of live seafood storage mechanisms to help align local seafood supply with demand, but there is a significant shortfall in specialized workforce training necessary to support this critical infrastructure used to sustain fresh, local, and sustainable seafood species. Increasing this knowledge is a critical step in building local markets, shortening supply chains, reducing food-related greenhouse gas emissions, and increasing local economic development.

Northwest Oregon Works would partner with local companies and service providers to develop On the Job Training or apprenticeships to address the specialize workforce training necessary to support these jobs. Leisure and Hospitality is one of Northwest Oregon Works identified sectors for investment, and we aim to support local workforce and business along the Oregon Coast with this initiative. In recognition of these benefits to our local workforce area, we are pleased to contribute time building this sector and the support to local businesses to develop On The Job Training (OJT) and Apprenticeships in this industry, which will support this critically important project.

HB 2909 is an essential part of ensuring that locally caught seafood is accessible and affordable. Moreover, the bill helps to ensure that businesses have the resources they need to process seafood locally and reduce the path from the ocean to the consumer. Small changes will make a big difference. A 10-percent increase in local seafood usage on the Oregon Coast would generate an additional \$90 million for local economies (OCVA, 2022).