

To: House Committee On Economic Development and Small Business

From: Warren Neth, Regional Food System Consultant

Date: Jan 24, 2023

RE: Support HB 2909 to harvest more economic benefits of Oregon seafood

Executive Summary: Only 10 percent of seafood in Oregon Coast restaurants' is locally sourced, if increased by 10 percent \$90 million could be generated annually in our rural coastal communities. Community food system assessments and collaborative planning over the past decade have identified critical infrastructure bottlenecks needed to expand our local food supply chain. Please support HB 2909 to make strategic investments into facilities for processing, storing, and cooking, essential to support Oregon's seafood industry.

Rebuilding rural industry infrastructure

Located in Newport, OR, Yaquina Lab, is currently supporting 5 local producers and one restaurant with processing space, dry and cold storage, and co-working/office space. The leadership team of Yaquina Lab has decades of experience as business owners in the central Oregon coast seafood industry. House Bill 2909 will support development of a live seafood/mariculture system, shared use commercial kitchen, and additional cold storage capacity on site, significantly increasing the number of producers, and marketing channels served.

Regional collaboration

Oregon Coast Visitor Association (OCVA) has led efforts to bring partner agencies and businesses together to rebuild the local food supply chain. OCVA received \$735,200 grant funding from the USDA LFPP grant program to support regional distribution networks. OCVA is using these funds to pay \$1 per mile for the Yaquina Lab to transport Oregon seafood to Bend's Agriculture Connections project. HB 2909 will build on partnerships that have secured local, and federal funding for multi-tiered, phased projects rebuilding local food supply chains that connect across rural Oregon.

Support HB2909 to keep local seafood local

Oregon's commercial harvesters landed around 313 million pounds of fish and shellfish in 2018, and only 10% of that ended up on Oregon Coast plates. HB2909 will fund investments in the seafood industry supply chain that are causing an estimated \$252 million in economic leakage. Keep Oregon seafood in Oregon, Support HB2909.