

Submitter: Deirdre Young  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation  
Measure: HB3382

My name is Deirdre Young. I am a naturalist and am actively involved with citizen science projects on the Oregon coast. I am writing today to ask you to please oppose HB 3382. I do not think we should make our state's deep-water estuaries exempt from land use laws that have been in place for decades. These rules have been important in protecting our coastline from irresponsible development practices. I don't know if HB 3382 is meant to be an end run around the estuary management reviews that have been recently underway. I do find it annoying that the bill has been brought up so quickly, which makes it suspect. I have other things to do today, but due to the slap dash rush of HB 3382 coming up for a hearing this evening, I have had to reorganize my schedule to make time to write to my state senator on this committee, as well as these public comments. What's the rush here? I know some parties in Coos Bay are trying to make a container port there. Well, okay, if they can do it within the current laws. I do not think a container port in Coos Bay deserves to be exempt from rules that look out for the welfare of overall marine and coastal integrity. Also, the bill isn't just for the estuary at Coos Bay. It includes exemptions for Yaquina Bay, Astoria, St. Helens, and Columbia/Willamette rivers.

This isn't the time to be loosening laws that protect the coastline, and estuaries in particular. This environment, which NOAA describes as the "nursery of the sea," supports important fisheries and helps mitigate flooding to name just two of its functions. With the direct effects of climate change influencing our coast and estuaries and, secondarily, population pressures from people seeking refuge from climate change, we need to strengthen protection. Humans cannot continue to put short-term economic desires ahead of the long-term health of our greater coastal communities. The first step is to oppose this bad bill.