

Submitter: Diane Meisenhelter
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation
Measure: HB3382

Dear members of the Joint Committee on Transportation,

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I am writing to express my opposition to the Port Dredging Exemption Bill, HB 3382. HB 3382 enables major deepwater ports in Oregon to bypass essential land use and environmental regulations for the sake of fast-tracking extensive dredging and channel modification. This bill sets a dangerous precedent, jeopardizing the health of some of the most ecologically important and sensitive waterways in our state. It would also have a negative impact on local coastal economies including oyster aquaculture, crabbing, and fishing of which there are already serious current concerns. Family and friends are already worried. Estuaries are nurseries for a wide variety of fish and wildlife species, including our iconic salmon. Eel grass that would be destroyed is essential habitat for many species and functions to improve water quality to support ocean health. The Oregon Coast's ability to withstand the impacts of climate change is largely dependent upon maintaining healthy ecosystems like estuaries. HB 3382 works against Oregon's Climate Goals by removing critical protections for estuaries, which sequester carbon 10x more efficiently than forests and serve as key species nurseries. HB 3382 also endangers Oregon's integrated Coastal Management Program which under the Coastal Zone Management Act which has served for over 50 years in balancing protection and development.

HB3382 would also jeopardize on-going efforts to update Oregon's estuary management plans based on scientific research and listening to the voices of coastal communities instead of a few private companies. Please vote no on HB 3382. Thanks for your time and consideration on this urgent matter. Thank you for your work during this legislative session.