

Submitter: Kay Kerriden  
On Behalf Of: League of Women Voters of Coos County  
Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation  
Measure: HB3382

I am Kay Kerriden, president of the League of Women Voters of Coos County. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this dangerous, damaging bill. The League opposes HB 3382, based on our long-held positions on land use planning and environmental issues, as well as our recently completed study on the Port of Coos Bay. The Coos Bay Estuary, beautiful as it is, has been severely degraded over the 150 years since Europeans first came to the area. The Estuary Management Plan, adopted in 1975, has helped to protect the Bay from further damage. If adopted, HB 3382 would remove those protections. Land use planning laws were enacted to protect Oregon's important resources. They have stood the test of time, and to consider waiving them for one project or one industry would open the door for unregulated development across the state. Let us be clear: allowing the level of dredging needed to widen and deepen the shipping channel to the desired dimensions for the container port would have enormous and devastating effects on the Coos Bay Estuary. We know that some of the most productive and important management areas in the Estuary will be destroyed if the channel is expanded. To allow this to happen without requiring environmental impact studies and consideration of the need for public benefit is the height of irresponsibility. We are just beginning to see the results of climate change with sea levels rising and weather disruptions, and we know that estuaries are ten times more efficient at storing carbon than forests are. The long-range survival of coastal communities such as ours depends on our ability to make good decisions about our resources. Now, more than ever, we need to use the land use planning process which is designed to help us with those decisions. We ask you to vote no on HB 3382. It is anti-environment and anti-planning, it threatens the ecological survival of the Coos Bay Estuary, and it sets a terrible precedent for the rest of the state. Please, kill this dangerous bill.