

Submitter: Sara Stephens
On Behalf Of: Self
Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation
Measure: HB3382

Tuesday, May 16, 2023

Dear Joint Transportation Committee,

We are writing to share our concerns about the lack of public process surrounding HB3382. As city councilors from the communities of Coos Bay and North Bend, we call on the Joint Committee of Transportation to engage with the local governments that will be most impacted by this bill, prior to taking a vote.

The Coos Bay Estuary is the heart of our local economy. It provides jobs in tourism, fishing, crabbing, recreation, exports and more. The tourism industry alone is responsible for bringing in over \$295.9 million to our local economy in 2022. When substantial changes are made to the rules and regulations governing the estuary, there is a risk that it will impact the economic heart of our community. As such, it is essential that our local jurisdictions are appropriately consulted.

Beyond the impacts to our local economies, the lack of public process surrounding HB3382 could also significantly impact our Coos Bay Estuary Management Plan, a plan that details our region's shared vision for economic development and the future of Coos Bay Estuary. The communities of Coos Bay, North Bend, Coos County, the Port of Coos Bay and other local stakeholders are currently involved in a robust community and industry-wide process to update this plan. HB3382's potential amendment to goal exceptions for statewide planning goal #16, estuarine resources, could impact our ability to implement our regional vision. More time is needed to assess the potential impacts of HB3382.

A substantial amendment was posted at 5:30 on Friday May 12th. It is alarming that there could be a vote as soon as Tuesday, May 16th, without adequate time for our City Councils or city staff to review a policy that could have lasting impacts on our local economies. The public hearing is scheduled for the same time as the Coos Bay City Council Meeting and when the North Bend City Council has a work session, so neither of our City Councils will be able to participate in the public hearing. This rapid turnaround will not give us adequate time to consult with the many commercial, industrial, recreational, and environmental users of the estuary, provide comment on the amendment language, or consult with agency staff. Furthermore, our councils have not been consulted by state agencies or briefed by legislators about this policy proposal or the amendment.

We call on you, the Joint Committee of Transportation, to reach out to our local governments prior to taking a vote on HB3382. Taking the time to consult with us can help ensure that the bill serves all communities within the state, and that it achieves its intended impacts of supporting local economies, protecting natural resources, and ensuring effective use of our ports.

With great concern,

Sara Stephens, Coos Bay City Council
Susanna Noordhoff, North Bend City Council
Carmen Matthews, Coos Bay City Council