



Dear Co-Chair Frederick, Co-Chair Levy and members of the Joint Committee on Natural Resources,

On behalf of the [Oregon Ocean Alliance](#), whose collective membership represents thousands of Oregonians, we ask you to please support a robust budget for the Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD). In particular, DLCD's Ocean Coastal Management Program needs full support to balance protection of our essential coastal and marine resources with development.

DLCD is one of the most important agencies in the state because it is what keeps Oregon, Oregon. Whether you care more about protecting land for conservation or developing land for the purposes of housing and economic development, DLCD plays a critical role in coordinating among both state and federal agencies, providing resources and technical support in land use planning, and facilitating stakeholder engagement in tackling complex issues. It is a small but mighty agency faced with ever-growing challenges facing both rural and urban communities related to housing shortages, scarce resources and land, climate hazards, protecting our natural resources, balancing competing interests, and more.

Lesser known is the role of the Oregon Coastal Management Program (OCMP), housed within DLCD. This program is essential in holistically managing the entire coast, from the crest of the coast range to the continental shelf. The coast is largely rural and ill-equipped to handle sea level rise, tsunami risk, increased visitation, housing shortages, and large development projects without the support of the OCMP. Further, much of the coast is largely dependent on sustainable management of Oregon's coastal and ocean natural resources. These resources are an important economic powerhouse for more than the coast, but the entire state - from fisheries to wildlife and tourism industries, and in providing climate and community resilience. DLCD plays a critical coordination role across the myriad of state and federal natural resource agencies with jurisdiction in this space, particularly in preserving Oregon statewide planning values. DLCD's coastal programs rely heavily on federal funding and the OCMP is asked to do more than ever before, with less money to do so. As the state faces an uncertain federal funding climate, we ask the committee to prioritize state investments in our coastal programs.

The Oregon Ocean Alliance is concerned that the agency's Policy Option Packages for coastal management did not make it into the Governor's Recommended Budget (GRB). These funding packages would have gone a long way in increasing capacity for communities and building greater resilience on the coast. We ask that the legislature consider increasing the agency's budget to support the OCMP's coastal priorities— to the benefit of coastal communities and every Oregonian who visits our iconic coast.

As you're deliberating this budget process, we want to make you aware of our Oregon Ocean Alliance priorities– the Rocky Habitat Stewardship Bill and the Eelgrass Action Bill, which collectively aim to increase capacity for the DLCD to manage these essential coastal habitats. Investing in these bills will help make up for some of the reductions proposed for the agency with regard to natural resources.

Respectfully,

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Co-Chair
Oregon Ocean Alliance

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