



February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2024

Dear Members of the House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water,

Pacific Seafood respectfully submits this testimony in strong opposition to HB 2965. This bill would preemptively ban finfish aquaculture in Oregon, shutting the door on a responsible, science-driven industry. Such a ban is not only unnecessary but also a significant step backward for Oregon's seafood economy, environmental leadership, and food security.

### **Sustainable Aquaculture Supports Food Security and Climate Goals**

We are committed to the sustainable harvesting and processing of wild-caught species, but we know that wild fish alone cannot meet the rising demand for seafood in the United States. Responsible aquaculture bolsters U.S. food security while mitigating climate impact by providing a sustainable, locally produced alternative to imports.

Aquaculture requires significantly less energy, produces fewer greenhouse gas emissions, and uses minimal coastal water compared to other forms of protein production. On average, farmed fish produce seven times less carbon dioxide, four times less nitrogen, and 2.5 times less phosphorus than farmed beef. Oregon should be looking toward solutions that reduce our reliance on environmentally intensive food sources, not banning an industry that is part of the solution.

### **Aquaculture and Wild Fisheries Work Together**

Contrary to misinformation, responsible, science-based aquaculture does not threaten wild fisheries—it supports them. Well-managed aquaculture reduces pressure on wild fish stocks, ensuring sustainable harvest levels and long-term viability for commercial and recreational fishing. The Nature Conservancy, World Wildlife Fund, and NOAA have all recognized aquaculture as essential to ensuring a stable, climate-friendly seafood supply.

Other progressive seafood-producing regions, including New Zealand, Iceland, and Norway, have embraced aquaculture as a key part of their sustainable seafood industries. Even Alaska, a state known for its strong commitment to wild fisheries, has begun exploring aquaculture as a way to support seafood production.

### **HB 2965 is Anti-Science and Anti-Business**

This bill is not based on science. NOAA, the United Nations, and The Nature Conservancy all support expanding net-pen aquaculture in the U.S. as part of broader efforts to address food



security and combat climate change. Oregon should be aligning with these national and global sustainability goals—not blocking them.

Furthermore, banning finfish aquaculture before it even exists in the state sends the message to businesses, investors, and innovators that Oregon is unwilling to engage in science-based policymaking.

We strongly urge the committee not to move HB 2956 out of committee and instead allow Oregon the option to pursue a future that includes both sustainable wild-caught fisheries and responsible aquaculture.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

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