

Submitter: Sean Rice

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2965

As an Oregon resident, I strongly support HB2965 to ban industrial aquaculture in our state to protect our coastal ecosystems, wild fish populations, and public health. I have seen firsthand the beauty and richness of our coastal waters, but also how fragile they can be. For example, Olympia oysters in Netarts Bay were driven to near extinction due to overharvesting and habitat degradation. These oysters served as one of the most important natural filters for our water supply, and they are gone now because of industrial fishing. Industrial fish farms, like all factory farms, exacerbate environmental and public health problems by polluting our waters, spreading disease to wild fish, and removing important parts of our water ecosystems, which allow them to thrive. Additionally, it is a dying industry and needlessly costs the taxpayers. Last year, Oregon and the federal government bailed out the fishing industry with millions of dollars because of declining fish populations. Why would we want industrial aquaculture to in Oregon, if all they will do is continue this downward economic trend and cost Oregon taxpayers millions and millions of dollars while only employing a few people? Oregon's coastal heritage is too valuable to risk for corporate profits. We must act now to protect our waters, our wildlife, and our communities.