



**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 3580
FROM THE CAPE MEARES COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION
February 21, 2025**

On behalf of the community of Cape Meares in Tillamook County, the Cape Meares Community Association Board urges passage of the Eelgrass Action Bill HB3580.

Located between the Pacific Ocean at Bayocean Spit and Tillamook Bay we live in a unique location with which to observe disturbing destruction of the eelgrass beds in Tillamook bay. As a single oyster farm operator prepares the bay bottom by dragging harrows and follows with dragging dredges to harvest, massive amounts of eelgrass is being ripped out by its roots. We witness islands of the destroyed grass in the bay and, as it flows out of the bay into the ocean, we see miles of piles of the grass wash up on our beach.

This unsustainable poor practice is harmful to the a myriad of marine animals that depend on eelgrass for cover from predation and nutrition. It negates efforts to recover threatened and endangered species such as the ESA listed Coho salmon that travel out the five rivers that empty into Tillamook Bay on their way to the ocean, and the Black Brant goose whose diet consists of 80% eelgrass.

All the communities around Tillamook bay depend, in large part, on tourism. The degradation of eelgrass beds in the bay is leading to declines in marine species that depend on it and therefore declines in tourists who expect to have those species in evidence. We have to work toward protection of these grass beds if we want to enjoy the economic benefits the Bay provides us.

The Eelgrass Action Bill HB 3580 is a good first step in the protection of this vital ecosystem.

Contact: Scott Gordon, CMCA Board Member
scottatbaja@yahoo.com

cc: Senator Suzanne Weber and Rep. Cyrus Javadi