

Testimony in Support of House Bill 3486

Oregon House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water

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“Co-Chairs Helm and Owens, Vice-Chair Finger McDonald, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Caitlin Plowman, and I am an instructor and researcher at the Oregon Institute of Marine Biology (OIMB). Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of House Bill 3486.

I recently completed my Ph.D. at OIMB, where my research focused on the reproduction of deep-sea invertebrates and long-term ecological monitoring of marine environments. Throughout my academic career, OIMB’s research vessels have been instrumental in facilitating critical marine studies in Oregon waters. These vessels have not only enabled groundbreaking research but have also provided invaluable hands-on training for many students and early-career scientists.

House Bill 3486 is essential to ensuring that researchers like me, as well as students and external scientists, continue to have access to OIMB’s research vessels. By expanding the Oceangoing Research Vessel Program to include OIMB’s fleet, this bill will enhance opportunities for education, collaboration, discovery, and scientific progress. Access to research vessels is crucial for investigating marine biodiversity, monitoring environmental changes, and informing sustainable management practices that benefit Oregon’s coastal communities.

Marine research is more than just academic—it directly impacts the health of Oregon’s coastal ecosystems and the livelihoods of those who depend on them. Data collected through research at sea inform policy decisions, support fisheries sustainability, and advance our understanding of climate change effects on marine life. Without continued investment in this infrastructure, we risk losing critical insights needed for responsible stewardship of our ocean resources.

As a scientist dedicated to marine research and conservation, I strongly urge your support for House Bill 3486. This legislation will ensure that Oregon remains a leader in marine science and that future researchers have the tools necessary to continue this vital work.

Thank you for your time and please let me know if I can answer any questions”