

Submitter: Brendan Deur

On Behalf Of:

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

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3580

Dear Co-chair Helm, Co-chair Owens and members of the committee,

I am writing to ask that you please support HB 3580, and our invaluable eelgrass meadows.. This bill offers a great opportunity to support biodiversity, coastal economies, and increase resilience to a changing climate.

Oregon's underwater eelgrass meadows are biodiversity hotspots, carbon sinks, and nursery habitat to many juvenile fish species. Their health is vital for sustaining our fisheries, maintaining water quality, and buffering against climate impacts. However, there are signs these essential habitats are in decline in Oregon. HB 3580 would set up a Taskforce to set conservation targets through a collaborative effort involving agencies, Tribes, scientists, local communities, and others. This bill is the first essential step to proactively prevent habitat loss before it's too late.

Having grown up on the coast, I feel a strong connection to the places HB 3580 promises to protect. I wish to return to my home place, and to raise my children in a landscape that they can enjoy and feel proud to similarly call home. Now is the time to act to protect those coastal ecosystems. For a modest investment we can ensure eelgrass meadows can be conserved for generations to come.

Sincerely,

Brendan Deur