

Submitter: Nadia Gardner

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 Committee Members:

As a north coast resident, I ask that you please support HB 3580 regarding eelgrass in our coastal estuaries. By doing so, you will support marine plant and wildlife biodiversity, rural coastal economies, and increase Oregon's resilience to a changing climate.

Oregon's underwater eelgrass meadows in coastal estuaries 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.

Now is the time to act to protect our coastal ecosystems. For a modest investment we can ensure eelgrass meadows and all their benefits to our rural communities can be conserved for generations to come. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Nadia Gardner
Arch Cape
Clatsop County, Oregon