

Submitter: Paul Engelmeyer  
On Behalf Of: Oregon Bird Alliance  
Committee: House Committee On Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3786

HB 3786 - Testimony  
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Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

I would like to take this opportunity to let you know I am in strong support of HB 3786, the Blue Economy Bill, which would provide critical funding to the Oregon Ocean Science Trust and the Oregon Ocean Science Fund.

I am a long time coastal resident of the Yachats area on the central Oregon, for over 40 years. I have also worked on land and sea conservation strategies for over 35 years. I served two terms with the Ocean Policy Advisory Council as the conservation representative. At the time we were dealing with the formation of the community led designation of our system of Marine Reserves and Marine Protected Areas. The Cape Perpetua Marine Reserve and Seabird Protected Area has hit the 10 year mark and has now formed the Cape Perpetua Collaborative.

I can proudly say Oregon is now are part of the international effort to truly protect marine biodiversity for current and future generations - Goal 19. This effort by the State and our coastal communities was a valuable effort. And now the research and baseline information gathered by State shows the value of state-supported ocean research in informing responsible management of Oregon's coastal resources.

For anyone paying attention it is clear we are in challenging times with changing ocean issues. Ocean Acidification in Oregon's coast waters show us the need to work toward a resiliency in our estuaries and ocean. Our industries depend on healthy and resilient ocean and estuaries - It is now acknowledged estuaries as being the nursery for many of our seafood products. It has only been a few years since we acknowledged estuaries for salmon productivity and this valuable life history pattern. That information came from the dedicated research by state, NOAA, USFS in multiple locations in Oregon's estuaries.

But, we now know there are multiple threats to our nearshore - warming waters, increasing ocean acidification, impacts from plastics and coastal erosion all pose significant threats to marine life, and infrastructure. If we are going to address these challenges, we need to commit to robust, state-funded science to fill key data gaps. We need a coordinated monitoring effort in our estuaries and nearshore if we expect to make informed sound policy decisions. This is a long term program in need of solid funding.

I believe HB 3786 will ensure that Oregon has the information necessary to:

- Track and better understand the pace and scale of ocean warming and acidification, allowing policymakers and managers to take proactive steps;
- Collect nearshore data to improve our understanding of changing ocean conditions and their impacts on key species; and
- Address coastal erosion threats to property and infrastructure by filling critical data gaps.

The Oregon Ocean Science Trust has already demonstrated its ability to effectively direct state funds toward high-impact research. By investing in this work, the state can strengthen decision-making processes, safeguard biodiversity, and protect the economic and ecological health of our coast. A strong commitment to ocean science is a commitment to Oregon's Blue Economy—ensuring that our coastal industries, communities, and ecosystems remain viable for generations to come.

I urge your support for HB 3786 to ensure that Oregon continues to lead in ocean science with the goal of coastal resilience for current and future generations.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Paul Engelmeyer  
Ten Mile Creek Sanctuary  
Oregon Bird Alliance/formerly Portland Audubon.