



HB 3568: Support Seafood to Schools

March 17, 2025

Chair Neron, Vice-Chair Dobson, Vice-Chair McIntyre and House Committee on Education Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today in support of HB 3568 – the Seafood to Schools Act.

Our team at the Oregon Coast Visitor Association (OCVA) commissioned a study a few years ago that found that 90 percent of the seafood served and sold on the Oregon Coast isn't from Oregon. If we could shift that dynamic by 10 percent, it would generate an additional \$90 million annually in the coastal economy. Part of this shift requires creating buying power, putting our world-class seafood in the bellies of our children and educating them about their food. HB 3568 accomplishes many of those goals and we urge your support.

Coastal communities are in the process of building necessary infrastructure and capacity to bring more Oregon-landed seafood to coastal and inland communities in our state. Through this work, OCVA and the Oregon Ocean Cluster (OOC) connected with the Oregon Farm to School Network to explore expanding access to - and education about - seafood for Oregon students. This effort is called Seafood To Schools and we have been working together and supporting this for a while now in partnership with Oregon Department of Agriculture.

The Seafood to Schools working group has successfully increased sales to schools, coordinated culinary training and resources for child nutrition programs, developed seafood recipes for child nutrition programs, and identified opportunities and needs for future growth. However, this effort really needs a boost to move to the next level of success.

The Seafood to Schools Bill is a wonderful way to ensure that school food preparers and students have the technical support to prepare fresh local seafood. It also would support training for future chefs in seafood butchery and preparation, in addition to sparking their imaginations through development of creative kid-friendly local seafood dishes.

It's not an expenditure; it's an investment that will pay off for generations. We encourage you to pass HB 3568.

Sincerely,

Marcus Hinz, Executive Director
Oregon Coast Visitors Association