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On Behalf Of:

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

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3786

Oregon's ocean, public beaches and estuaries are a beloved part of the state's identity and a key economic driver for coastal communities. The ocean plays a critical role in our climate, which is having devastating impacts on land in the form of fire, drought and heat waves. Meanwhile, at sea, changing ocean conditions are having profound effects on species abundance, distribution and biodiversity. All this affects the well-being of all Oregonians across the state.

State decision makers need good science and data to inform management and use of ocean, beach, estuary, and coastal transportation resources. Examples include: Ocean shore and littoral cell policy requires managing infrastructure in a dynamic environment. Whether the state is working on mitigation plans and processes for the beach, or applying Goal 18 to beach infrastructure, good data makes for good decisions.

Any future development of renewable energy off the Oregon Coast will require improved understanding of infrastructure impacts to nearshore ecosystems.

Further understanding the ocean, beach and estuarine ecosystems contribution to blue carbon storage and climate change is a timely and relevant topic for state decision makers.

ODFW nearshore management of commercial and recreational fisheries, ecosystem disruptions due to sea urchins, the proposed reintroduction of sea otters and other nearshore species management are all high priorities for the State of Oregon.

Coastal storm surge, coastal erosion, and sea level rise threaten coastal highways and properties, which are critical to residents and tourists, and are the lifeblood of coastal communities.

The Oregon Ocean Science Trust has demonstrated accountability and success in directing state funds to the highest and best use for science and research.

By allocating these funds, the state can improve decision making as well as improve our understanding of how the ocean is changing, how these changing conditions are affecting biodiversity and the species upon which people depend, and how we can best protect and enhance the resilience of these resources.