

Cless Woodward

To: Senate Committee on Energy and Environment

Topic: SB1047

In Support of SB1047

My name is James Clesson (Cless) Woodward. I was born in Curry County, grew up in Port Orford, and graduated from Pacific High School in 1986. My great-great-grandfather Walter Sutton had his newspaper, the Port Orford Tribune first issue recorded by the Library of Congress on May 17, 1892. My family has been in the Port Orford town area for just shy of 150 years.

In my short lifetime, I have watched a great town suffer severe economic downturns time and time again. My family has been involved heavily in commercial fishing, logging, ranching, newspaper, and hospitality segments throughout our time in the community. I have personally witnessed as a young man and through my school years, watch our Pacific High School go from a High School of around 250 students 9 – 12 grades in the late 70's to around 45 students in the past few years. It is devastating to see how a community can lose portions of different industries and watch the community suffer such economic downturn. The question for years has been, "what can we build in Port Orford to help our community and stimulate our new tourism focus while we are watching industries go away?".

I am writing this letter to support the current golf project underway in Curry County just north of Port Orford. I would personally like to tell you how I have watched Bandon Oregon create a robust opportunity from the Bandon Dunes Golf Course over the past 27 years or so. There hardly is a person I talk to in my industry of construction who has not heard of Bandon Dunes, or specifically if they play golf, has not played Bandon Dunes. I've heard the Mayor of Bandon (I believe she has been the mayor for around 20 years) talk about how the golf course has positively helped Bandon in several economic areas. I know people who have worked for the golf course benefitted from golfing clients shopping, eating, and using several of the local shops while they are visiting the golf course. This has been a huge benefit for Bandon.

So, what does this mean for Port Orford? We have the same opportunity to benefit from this same type of experience that Bandon has. People who come down to Bandon Dunes would also flock to Port Orford to play this golf course also. Everyone I have talked to about the possibility of a golf course of quality in Port Orford who plays Bandon Dunes said that they would absolutely play both places. Many would stay in Port Orford, and this would allow much economic growth for our small town. This opportunity will create jobs for everyone. Much of my working youth was on ranches and then as I got older, in the logging woods. Those jobs are shrinking and going away. This would provide family jobs and the businesses in the town would flourish with this added project.

Please consider passing SB1047 to help Curry County and help the people who live in this beautiful area with some hope of helping bring economic growth back to their families.

Thank you for your time and consideration in this effort.

Sincerely,

Cless Woodward