

**Testimony of the Oregon International Port of Coos Bay
Before the Joint Transportation Committee
Oregon Legislature
Re: Senate Bill 361-1
3/25/25**

Chairs McLain and Gorsek and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of Senate Bill 361 with the “-1” amendments. As Oregon’s largest deep-draft coastal harbor and a critical economic driver for the South Coast region, the Port plays an essential role in supporting maritime commerce, commercial and recreational fishing, and the regional supply chain.

Senate Bill 361 provides much-needed financial assistance to ports across Oregon, many of which are facing growing financial challenges due to regulatory changes, rising maintenance costs, and limited revenue sources.

These financial pressures are forcing some ports to make difficult decisions about whether they can continue to maintain their marinas. Without additional funding support, increasing numbers of ports may be faced with potentially reducing access to critical marine infrastructure for both commercial and recreational users.

For the Port of Coos Bay, dredging remains a top priority to ensure safe and efficient navigation for vessels utilizing the Charleston Marina Complex. Over time, natural sedimentation has led to annual shoaling at an entrance to the Charleston Marina. This shoal poses a significant navigational hazard, particularly for commercial and recreational vessels. The encroaching shoal has jeopardized access to our main fuel dock, dozens of boat slips and a major seafood processing facility. The Port of Coos Bay is home to the third largest commercial fishing fleet on the Oregon Coast as well as an active recreational and charter fishing community. Skyrocketing dredging costs are becoming a threat to their viability due to its impact on critical coastal infrastructure.

The Port has taken temporary mitigation measures, such as closing one side of our transient dock to allow for the safe passage of larger commercial fishing vessels. However, these measures are not a long-term solution. The Port continues to coordinate with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and other partners, but without adequate funding, the Port’s ability to maintain safe navigation and ensure continued access to the Charleston Marina Complex will be compromised.

Senate Bill 361-1 will provide the critical financial support needed for ports like ours to address these challenges, safeguard vital infrastructure, and sustain economic activity in our coastal communities.

We strongly urge your support of this important legislation, thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully submitted,
Matt Friesen
Oregon International Port of Coos Bay