

Floyd E. Holcom Testimony for the 2025 - Joint Committee on Ways and Means: HB5006, SB2

#READY THE CHIEF!

Co-Chairs, Senator Lieber and Representative Sanchez, Co-Vice-Chairs Senator Girod, Representative Gomberg, and Representative Smith, Committee Members Senators and Representatives, thank you for Coming to My Native Hometown of Astoria, Oregon for this Important Hearing and allowing me to Testify with all of you again on behalf of the Support of SB 2, and **#ReadytheChief**.

To Learn about the New Disaster Preparation Video presented to last weeks Senate Emergency Committee Please Play the new 2025 Video: <https://youtu.be/wbnCoBWQisA?si=IbH1mNRlvDANxg0i>

Today, The Ground Truth is that we are still not prepared. The Emergency Situation has not changed and only getting much worse. Every month we are seeing news reports of earthquakes off the Oregon Coast, now a Volcano Eruption may beat the Cascadia Timeline this year. If the Astoria Bridge, Longview Bridge or St. Johns Bridge Collapse in any Scenario, Oregon's Economic Losses are in the Billions. SB2 saves our economy \$18 Million a day in these scenarios. That means the pay off is in hours, not days. That should get all of us Oregonians Attention. Let me make it Chrystal clear, the cost Benefit Analysis number of the passage of Emergency SB2 is about 284, and that's not counting that the money is going right back into local Jobs.

Your fellow Senators and past Senators over the years have passed and moved these Salvage Chief Bills, SB 678, SB 826, SB 200 and now SB 2, through committees to this committee (in which I ask your staff these historical testimonies be preserved and read into this new Emergency Bill SB 2). And just this week, we successfully emerged again from the Senate Committee to be forwarded to this Ways and Means Committee. But it is important for you to remember Why you all voted yes! And that is why I'm here today.

Essentially the major fact that has changed, is that the cost of repairs and upgrades to this Historic WW2 and Repurposed Veteran Vessel - Salvage Chief, have increased as well as the Emergency Mitigation costs of the Importance of Columbia River Economic Trade Value with the **World**. Unfortunately, we are on our own here in Oregon. The Federal Government will be stretched to help us.

The above factual infomercial, with letters and emails, sent to each one of you by the Emergency Managers, Engineers, Doctors and Lawyers, Maritime Students and Citizens of each of your districts identify the critical importance of SB 2. The researched reports, testimony and reality of efficient and low-cost Dollar for Dollar readiness, are the best and only chance we have in meeting these short-term disaster challenges that our emergency disaster managers, transportation and infrastructure experts are predicting, especially on the Oregon Coast, Columbia River from Astoria to Lewiston, Idaho, as well as both sides of our State Boarder. Cascadia Subduction, and the strong possibilities of Compromised and choked off Shipping with Economics in the multiple Billions of lost Dollars, Oregon needs to train and prepare for this disastrous event that will be far worse than Mt. St. Helens. The Salvage Chief can meet this mission, on its water highway, with our combined assistance.

Today, I ask your committee to support SB2 and send it to the floor vote where I'm told this Bill will continue to receive its needed additional and continued support for passage.

Like your colleagues have told me, it's one of those Bills that just makes sense. Again, I ask your historical committee reports to be attached to your internal review.

This Senate Bill emphasizes the "here and now" needs on the Columbia River.

1. The critical transportation on the Columbia River Highway is extremely vulnerable. The Boarder Bridges that cross the river highway, as ODOT calls them, currently have no removal plan and cannot sustain the loads of a major Earthquake, in some cases lower than a 6.1 earthquake could shut down the Columbia River Transportation system. That answer has not changed in

the last several years and it may not ever change. Given these bridges collapse into the Columbia and Willamette Rivers, and in an Emergency, the Salvage Chief is right here in Oregon, and will be the cooperative tool our local, National and State experts can use to perform the clearing operations needed to get these systems back up and functioning. There is no other Vessel available like the Salvage Chief, and there are none being built like it in the near future.

2. Outside of the Salvage Chief, there are no near-term solutions for readiness on the Columbia River, meaning no real sustainability solution in case of a disaster. And given every day that the ships anchor in our river, The Salvage Chief stays ready to be called upon, like it has since 1949, but it needs the support of you maintain that readiness until something takes its place. And again, right now, there is nothing outside of the Chief. The USCG will Evacuate, the Major Emergency Plans have evacuation plans to Redmond and Yakima, with very little depth of how that is going to happen when this thing hits.

We can be resilient in the transportation emergency challenges of tomorrow with the Salvage Chief and given all of that, there are very few requests that you receive in these committees that has already saved and invested more than 50 Million Dollars in Private funds in Oregon this last 40 plus years, and the request for 3.0 Million of public funds to get it ready is an investment for the continued training, survival and connectivity to keep both our Rural and Urban citizens alive as well as continuing the direct support of Oregon shipyard Workers. For this ship and our State to be truly ready, it needs the Passage of SB 2. Once again, one day of recovered passage on the Columbia River is a savings of 18 million Dollars per day in Lost Real Economic Revenue in this predicted disaster, and every day that is shaved off that duration by the Salvage Chief is a win for all of us.

In the Words of a former USCG Captain of the Port: “How Much would it cost to build a Ship like the Salvage Chief Today, (USCG Answer: North of 200 million, Sir)” “Mr. Holcom, How Much would it take to

get the Salvage Chief back up and running? (Holcom Answer: Sir, with State Support and Donations, around 1.9-2 million, Spent Locally. 2020)” “I guess we Know the Answer, Ready the Chief!”.

Now it’s 2025 and its 3 Million Dollars, Please Vote Yes and convince your colleagues how important a YES Vote is this year.

Thank you for your time and dedication to our great State. **#ReadytheChief**

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