

April 16, 2025



Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Wildfire

Re: HB 3814 -3 (Neutral)

Chair Golden, Vice Chair Nash and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of Surfrider Foundation's Oregon chapter network, we offer neutral testimony on HB 3814, -3 amendment. Surfrider was strongly opposed to earlier versions of this legislation that did not adequately address important sideboards for public health and expanding/future seafood processing facilities. However, we appreciated the opportunity the House policy committee and bill's sponsors provided to arrive at the -3 amendment. The -3 amendment addresses key public health sideboards, site-specific permitting and needed flexibility for the agency and industry to evolve wastewater treatment with infrastructure investments. We are also aware of a needed clerical amendment necessary for clarity which may follow at the recommendation of the Department of Justice and Dept. of Environmental Quality.

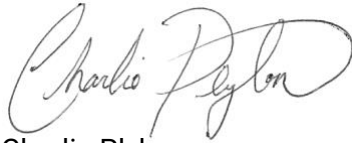
Surfrider Foundation chapters are local, non-profit charters, dedicated to the protection and enjoyment of our oceans, waves and beaches. We are watermen and women and spend significant amounts of recreational time both in and on the water as swimmers, surfers, kayakers, fish and shellfish harvesters. As such, we're often the canary in the coal mine so to speak when it comes to water-borne illnesses and pathogens associated with water contact. So much so that we in fact have an entire recreational monitoring program, our Blue Water Task Force Program where in Oregon anywhere from 40-80 water quality testing volunteers conduct weekly monitoring of recreational waters. The point is to know before we go, to understand the public health risk we run in recreating in our ocean, estuarine or bay waters. Why? Because we get sick.

I got involved with Surfrider about 25 years ago because I got a severe bacterial infection from surfing and was hospitalized. I learned from the nurse at the hospital (who was an avid bay swimmer) that Oregon had no public health water quality testing for recreational users and water quality contact on our coast. I learned I wasn't alone, nearly 10 million cases of water-borne illnesses from water recreation occurs annually in the US. Since then, we've established 8 volunteer-run and funded water quality labs in Oregon (over 100 across the nation) and established the federal BEACH Act to fund state water quality monitoring programs for beaches and coastal waters. We do not take the suspension and reform of recreational water quality standards lightly, thus were extremely concerned with the original version of this bill.

Because we deeply care, support and are a part of the fishing and seafood community, we offer this neutral testimony on the good faith to a path for a solution. We believe mixing zones may be integral to the solution for the survival of this industry today until expanded infrastructure for wastewater treatment on the coast exist. We do not believe we should create forever policy for all seafood processing plants, now and forever to be in our future, based on the premise that this is a necessity. Rather, it should, as in all other states, be an option of the agency based on reasonable facts presented and evaluation of site-specific and facility needs and the current technology and services available. We are pleased the -3 amendment presents both a necessary

path forward for the industry today, while keeping the door open for improved wastewater treatment infrastructure in the future. These recommendations are consistent with how mixing zones are regulated for public health in our neighboring states as well as guidance from EPA on altering recreational water quality standards.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Charlie Plybon". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Charlie" and last name "Plybon" clearly legible.

Charlie Plybon
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