

REVENUE: No revenue impact

FISCAL: No fiscal impact

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<b>Action:</b>	Be Adopted
<b>Vote:</b>	7 - 0 - 1
<b>Yeas:</b>	Bailey, Barnhart, Bentz, Gilliam, Jenson, Smith J., Cannon
<b>Nays:</b>	0
<b>Exc.:</b>	Boone
<b>Prepared By:</b>	Beth Patrino, Administrator
<b>Meeting Dates:</b>	4/2

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**WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:** Recognizes the responsibility of Oregon in providing leadership in the nation's stewardship of oceans and that the loss of research vessel Wecoma without replacement is a net economic loss to Oregon. Resolves to support operation of new oceans class research vessel to be obtained through competitive proposal to the United States Navy.

**ISSUES DISCUSSED:**

- Economic impact of research vessel Wecoma
- Types of research conducted
- Application process, including requirement to demonstrate financial commitment toward operating expenses
- Other states' funding support for research vessels

**EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT:** No amendment.

**BACKGROUND:** The Research Vessel Wecoma is a large, research-class ship based in Newport, Oregon. The ship is part of the national oceanic fleet, owned by the National Science Foundation and operated by Oregon State University (OSU). Its location in Oregon provides central access to the west coast for all oceanic researchers and brings many national and international scientists to Oregon. After more than 30 years of operation, a replacement ship is needed for the Wecoma.

The United States Navy will soon release its request for proposals for academic institutions to be the operator for the successor to the Wecoma. Two new ships will be built at a cost of approximately \$100 million each – one for the east coast and one for the west coast. In order to be considered as a potential operator, an applicant must demonstrate significant financial commitment toward the ship's operational costs. Based on recent experience, OSU estimates required cost-sharing in the range of \$500,000 per year. The federal government will fund the bulk of the operating costs estimated to be \$5 million per year. In return for its investment, Oregon will be able to allocate "ship days" to various projects, such as state agency research and educational opportunities for university students. In addition, the state will benefit from ship-related jobs and estimated annual expenditures of approximately \$3.5 million associated with the ship. Although no resources are required during the 2009-2011 biennium, the resolution is necessary now as OSU begins the process of submitting a competitive bid.

4/6/2009 11:14:00 AM

*This summary has not been adopted or officially endorsed by action of the committee.*