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OREGON SALMON COMMISSION

MEASURE: HB 4050
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SUBMITTED BY: Nancy Fitzpatrick

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The Oregon Salmon Commission, an industry funded state commodity commission representing the commercial Ocean Salmon fishing industry, submits the following comments in support of HB 4050.

Currently there are 1,000 Salmon Troll Permits available through the Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife making this a limited entry fishery.

When license renewals by the end of each year go below this cap, ODFW will hold a lottery to reissue those permits, bringing the number back up to 1,000. These lottery permits are currently available at a much-reduced rate compared to the value of a permit. This system does not allow the fisherman's permit to gain any real value and reduces its opportunity to be a tradable commodity.

The Oregon Salmon Commission has held many meetings with the salmon fleet to discuss the challenges facing the Oregon salmon troller. The commission is working with the industry to outline the priorities and specific needs for the years ahead that reflect these challenges and our continuing goals into the future.

One of the items to be discussed is the possible restructuring of the salmon fleet, which could include fleet reduction. In order for any type of reduction, the present lottery system for permit issuance through the Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife would need to be eliminated.

This should also decrease the speculation of people buying cheap permits in the lottery with no intention of fishing them.

Another section of the bill would eliminate the requirement to have landed 100 pounds of salmon in order to transfer a troll permit to another vessel. Since 2006, the Oregon salmon troll fishery has had disastrous years with closures and when open, few fish have been landed.

With this requirement in place, fishermen who have not been able to continue fishing and were not able to land 100 pounds, had to ask the Salmon Permit Board for an exemption in order to sell their permit and leave the industry. HB 4050 will eliminate this requirement.

The Oregon Salmon Commission representing the salmon troll fishery supports HB 4050. These have been some difficult years for the ocean commercial salmon fishery and we this bill will benefit the industry. Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments.

Nancy Fitzpatrick, Executive Director
Oregon Salmon Commission