

March 24, 2013

Representative Bailey, Chair
House Energy and Environment Committee
State Capitol
Salem, OR

RE: HB 3451: Establishes Oceangoing Research Vessel Program

Dear Chairman Bailey,

The City of Newport supports the passage of HB 3451 that will provide \$330,000 in state funding for a comprehensive ocean research vessel program. This funding would support research conducted from research vessels by Oregon University System students and faculty as well as State of Oregon employees. The information gathered will help local communities and the state to develop effective marine and coastal policies related to fisheries, offshore energy, tourism and conservation.

Oregon is the only state in the US that does not provide state support for federally financed ocean research vessels that operate out of its ports. Lack of state support puts these vessels at risk because their research days are limited.

The City of Newport was gratified that the National Science Foundation recently awarded Oregon State University a \$3 million grant to design a new ocean research vessel. We anticipate that the new vessel, once constructed, would replace the *Oceanus*, that currently operates out of Yaquina Bay. The *Oceanus* annually expends approximately \$3.6 million in the local area for fuel, crew support and other operations. We risk losing the *Oceanus* and its successor if other states provide greater assurances of active deployment due to the support they commit to vessel operations. This would be a loss for the economy of the central Oregon coast.

The City of Newport recognizes the value of ocean research, both economically to our local community and scientifically to the entire state. The passage of HB 3451 ensures that Oregon scientists can continue to conduct needed research within Oregon's coastal waters and beyond.

Sincerely,

Sandra Roumagoux, Mayor
City of Newport