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TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 3451

Chair Bailey and members of the Committee: Thank you for your time today. I am Bill Hall, Chair of the Lincoln County Board of Commissioners, and I am here in support of House Bill 3451. For several years, our county government has been providing advocacy and resources to further the development of Yaquina Bay as a hub for ocean science. There are significant reasons from both a scientific and economic standpoint to support this. The oceans are truly our final frontier. Even though they cover the majority of our globe, our potential for scientific discovery remains huge. The implications for climate change, renewable energy production, the global food supply and the overall health of our planet are mind boggling. Ocean science is also emerging as a major economic driver for the central coast. It generated 60 million dollars in personal income last year and supplanted timber production as Lincoln County's third largest industry.

Oregon State University has a long and proud history in Ocean science. This proposal for an Oceangoing Research Program builds on OSU's decades of expertise in ocean research, stretching back to the launch of the Wecoma in 1975. It opens the opportunity to leverage federal and other funding resources for this important work, as well as providing strong direction for that work.

We often talk about the day when Newport will be known as "the Woods Hole of the West." But I look to the day when that great ocean research center in Massachusetts will be thought of as "the Newport of the east."

