



2/13/13

Representative Brad Witt
Chair, House Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources

Re: House Bill 2233, Abandoned and Derelict Vessels
Public Hearing 2/14/2013, 8:00 AM

Chair Witt and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Oregon Parks Association (OPA) Board of Directors, I would like to express our support for HB 2233, which modifies laws governing seizure of abandoned and derelict vessels. OPA has worked closely with the Oregon State Marine Board (OSMB) for many years on a broad range of boating related issues and have always found the staff to be diligent and fair while investigating and trying to resolve issues. We find this once again to be the case with HB 2233, Abandoned and Derelict Vessels.

As parks and recreation providers, OPA members see firsthand the safety and environmental threats posed by abandoned and derelict vessels on Oregon's waterways. This is a growing issue and the current laws and regulations are inadequate to deal with the problem. HB 2233 would provide the OSMB and local jurisdictions the tools necessary to help rectify the existing problem vessels and provide an opportunity to deal with many derelict vessels, before they can become an even larger safety and environmental hazards.

Although there is existing legislation regarding abandoned vessels, the current program is cumbersome and difficult for law enforcement agencies to implement. We believe the proposed legislation will clarify the issue making it easier to perform the necessary cleanup and protect Oregon's waterways and Oregon Boaters.

OPA urges you to pass HB2233. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this important issue.

Sincerely,

Steve Lambert
Oregon Parks Association, President