

OREGON DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES

Senate Bill 116 – Continuation of Shipping Transport of Aquatic Invasive Species Task Force

February 18, 2013

Background

- Commercial shipping transport operations can result in the unintentional introduction of non-native aquatic invasive species to state waters. These nuisance species can impart significant ecological and/or economic harm.
- Ballast water management regulations for transoceanic and coast-wide vessel arrivals into Oregon waters (ORS 783.620 – 783.640) were established in 2002 to reduce the risk of introducing aquatic invasive species.
- DEQ administers the states Ballast Water Management Program; including monitoring of vessel traffic and discharge activities, and reporting compliance; conducting vessel inspections, technical outreach and enforcement actions.
- Oceanic ballast water exchange is the most widely used management practice for reducing the risk of transporting non-native species. However, due to high variability in the efficacy of this management practice, other technology based solutions are being promulgated under pending regulatory changes in other jurisdictions.

Objectives of SB 116

- Re-establish task force that had been active since 2001 (originally known as 'Ballast Water Task Force', but renamed in 2007).
- Convene key stakeholders to study ongoing and emerging issues related to ballast water and vessel biofouling management.
- Produce a report to the 2015 Legislature including recommendations for further development of Oregon's management of shipping related pathways for aquatic invasive species, particularly in response to pending regulatory changes by the federal government and in neighboring states.

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Key Supporting Points

- The 2010 Task Force report recommended that the 2011 Legislature amend the sunset date to allow the group to reconvene to assess emerging policy issues and provide future program development recommendations to the state.
- DEQ has determined that this bill would have minimal fiscal impact to the state.
- Existing agency resources that supported Task Force activities in the past can be made available to support the Task Force and preparation of the June 2014 report to the Legislature.

Testimony provided by:

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