



February 25, 2013

Senator Chris Edwards and Representative Ben Unger, Co-Chairs  
Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee on Natural Resources  
900 Court St. NE, Room 453  
Salem, Oregon 97301

*Re: In support of the Oregon Department of Agriculture Budget.*

Dear Members of the Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee:

The Oregon Dungeness Crab Commission (ODCC) is an industry-funded agency under the umbrella of the Oregon Department of Agriculture's (ODA) Commodity Commission program. We represent 429 'limited entry' Oregon Dungeness crab permit holders, and it's on their behalf that we endorse the ODA budget presently under review and consideration.

We work closely with ODA staff in a variety of arenas, and derive significant value from their expertise, understanding, dedication and cooperation. Their commitment to helping all sectors of Oregon agriculture prosper, including fisheries, is evident in both the programs they develop and the relationships they build. The following highlights a few of the ways we benefit from our association with the agency and its people.

ODA's oversight of the state's 23 commodity commissions enables us to focus on enhancing our respective industries with the knowledge that we are in compliance with the myriad of regulations governing state agencies and the services they provide. That assurance goes a long way in making our volunteer boards comfortable with the decisions they make and the fiduciary responsibility they assume as commissioners.

Oregon is viewed as a leader within the West Coast crab industry, thanks in part, to the Ag Development and Marketing Division's (ADMD) supervisory role in the annual crab price negotiations. This important partnership with industry has generated millions of dollars in value over the years and has contributed to safe and orderly 'openers', constructive working relationships between harvesters and processors, and a track record of cooperation that's the envy of our neighbors in CA and WA-state.

We depend on the expertise of the Food Safety Division to insure that when the harvest begins and millions of pounds of crab are being processed along the coast, pre-season sampling and testing for marine toxins conducted at the ODA lab will offer consumers the high degree of product safety assurance they expect and deserve. Oregon seafood processors are so dependent on this program that it is written into their HACCP protocols and they would be reluctant to see

the season opened until this important process is completed.

Finally, ODA, through its Ag Development and Marketing Division in Portland, continues to pave the way for Oregon companies looking to find new markets and customers for their products and services around the globe. The relationships they have built with parallel government agencies in foreign countries that are important trade partners, serve us well as we navigate the complexities and regulatory challenges of exporting seafood to Asia and beyond.

For all these reasons, the Oregon Dungeness Crab Commission encourages you to fund the ODA at the requested levels and continue your legislative support of their work on behalf of all of Oregon agriculture.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nick Furman", with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke at the end.

Nick Furman  
ODCC

cc: ODA  
ODCC