

Research & Strategic Partnerships

Mark D. Sytsma
Associate Vice President

Mail Code RSP 503-725-2213 tel
Post Office Box 751 503-725-8170 fax
Portland, OR 97207-0751 sytsmam@pdx.edu

February 10, 2015

Sen. Chris Edwards, Chair
Senate Committee on Environment & Natural Resources
900 Court St. NE, S- 411
Salem, Oregon 97301

Su: SB 261 Testimony

Dear Chair Edwards:

As chair of the Task Force on Shipping Transport of Aquatic Invasive Species, I am writing to testify in support of Senate Bill 261. The task force is comprised of a diverse group of stakeholders and pursues consensus-based solutions for ballast water management of commercial vessels in Oregon. The primary focus of the 2014 task force was to evaluate current DEQ ballast water program efforts and emerging issues in order to make recommendations to the 2015 Legislature, as necessary. After examining the program's operations and budget status we concluded that adequate prevention efforts could not be sustained beyond 2015 without a modest increase to the ballast water management fee.

SB 261 is one of four primary recommendations to the 2015 Legislature, and reflects the hard work and careful deliberations of the task force in order to protect Oregon's rivers and coast from aquatic invasive species. The proposed fee increase to \$88 per vessel arrival – with a commensurate increase in General Fund support (identified in the DEQ Policy Option Package 136) – simply aims to maintain current ballast water program service levels (1.5 FTE) and uphold a 50/50 cost share between general fund and private industry support for the program. Without the fee increase, we are concerned that a reduction in vessel inspections and other prevention efforts would increase the risk of introducing harmful aquatic invasive species to the state.

The task force recognizes the value and importance of the work being done by DEQ's Ballast Water Management Program to protect Oregon waterways from the threat of aquatic invasive species, and we expect that the fee increase will be adequate to maintain the programs current activities through the 2017-19 biennium.

For your reference, I have attached a fact sheet describing the task force organization and objectives, as well as a copy of our report to the 2015 Legislature.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark D. Sytsma". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "M" and "S".

Mark D. Sytsma
Chair, Shipping Transport of Aquatic Invasive Species Task Force
Professor of Environmental Science and Management

Encl:

STAIS Task Force Fact Sheet
STAIS Task Force Report (2014)

Cc:

Senator Michael Dembrow
Senator Alan Olsen (Vice-Chair)
Senator Floyd Prozanski
Senator Chuck Thomsen
Ms. Beth Reiley (Committee Admin.)