

**Enrolled**  
**House Joint Memorial 20**

Sponsored by Representatives GOMBERG, MCKEOWN, Senators ROBLAN, JOHNSON; Representatives BOONE, KRIEGER, WHISNANT, Senators KRUSE, WHITSETT

To the President of the United States, the Commandant of the United States Coast Guard and the Senate and the House of Representatives of the United States of America, in Congress assembled:

We, your memorialists, the Seventy-eighth Legislative Assembly of the State of Oregon, in legislative session assembled, respectfully represent as follows:

Whereas Oregon borders the Pacific Ocean, which is both beautiful and treacherous; and

Whereas Oregon's commercial, charter and recreational ocean and bay fisheries are a large and important component of Oregon's coastal economies; and

Whereas over 250 commercial boats, and thousands more recreational and charter boats, ply the waters off the central coast of Oregon each year; and

Whereas offshore fishing is an implicitly dangerous activity; and

Whereas vessels occasionally sink or capsize, and mariners are at risk of falling overboard; and

Whereas millions of tourists visit the Oregon coast annually, and a number of them find themselves in distress on beaches or ocean cliffs; and

Whereas surfing, body boarding and kayaking are popular recreational activities along the coast; and

Whereas the average ocean temperature off the central coast of Oregon ranges between 49 and 55 degrees Fahrenheit; and

Whereas United States Coast Guard sources indicate that an overboard mariner can become functionally disabled in less than 30 minutes in water at these temperatures, with increasing risk of death the longer an individual remains immersed; and

Whereas Newport is one of the top 20 commercial fishing ports in the United States and is second in the nation for recreational ocean fishing; and

Whereas Newport is a major hub for marine research and education and the home port of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration west coast fleet and the Oregon State University research vessel, as well as the destination of many visiting research vessels; and

Whereas since 1987, the United States Coast Guard has maintained a search and rescue helicopter presence at Air Facility Newport, based at Newport Municipal Airport, as the result of the deaths of three Newport fishers; and

Whereas according to a recent Surfrider Foundation report, from 2007 to 2013, a total of 159 lives were saved by the United States Coast Guard in the waters off of Newport and 3,780 lives were assisted; and

Whereas the United States Coast Guard also provides emergency rescue services to loggers and foresters who labor in the remote, mountainous, rugged Coast Range; and

Whereas the men and women of the United States Coast Guard are held in the highest esteem and regard by Oregonians for their courage, dedication and intrepidity in the cause of saving lives; and

Whereas the United States Coast Guard command announced its intention in September 2014 to close Air Facility Newport for financial reasons; and

Whereas should Air Facility Newport close, more than one hour of travel would be required for a rescue helicopter from a United States Coast Guard air station in Astoria or North Bend to reach areas of the central coast; and

Whereas Air Facility Newport is the only United States Coast Guard facility in Oregon that is not located in a tsunami inundation zone; and

Whereas the maritime community on the Oregon coast, most notably the Newport Fishermen's Wives, rallied around the cause of saving Air Facility Newport and successfully advocated for the facility to remain open through the end of 2015; and

Whereas the United States Coast Guard budget for 2016 indicates that Air Facility Newport will be closed despite the one-year delay; and

Whereas the closure of the United States Coast Guard Air Facility Newport will be a grave threat to the safety of Oregon mariners and all others who enjoy the Oregon central coast; now, therefore,

**Be It Resolved by the Legislative Assembly of the State of Oregon:**

That we, the members of the Seventy-eighth Legislative Assembly, respectfully request that the Congress of the United States of America authorize and appropriate adequate funding to the United States Coast Guard to maintain the United States Coast Guard Air Facility Newport in perpetuity; and be it further

Resolved, That a copy of this memorial shall be sent to the President of the United States, to the Senate Majority Leader, to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, to the Commandant of the United States Coast Guard and to each member of the Oregon Congressional Delegation.

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Adopted by House May 19, 2015

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Timothy G. Sekerak, Chief Clerk of House

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Tina Kotek, Speaker of House

Adopted by Senate June 3, 2015

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Peter Courtney, President of Senate