



## DOUGLAS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

CHRIS BOICE    TIM FREEMAN    GARY LEIF

1036 SE Douglas Ave., Room 217 • Roseburg, Oregon 97470

February 21, 2017

Dear Ports of Oregon,

The Douglas County Board of Commissioners writes to you today regarding **House Bill 2902** as drafted by the Oregon Public Ports Association (OPPA). This bill would grant public ports the ability to compete with Oregon small businesses by operating shipyards. Private shipyards make up a large part of the economy on the south coast of Oregon. This industry is directly responsible for the creation and maintenance of hundreds of family wage jobs and help support many other ancillary small businesses. Three such shipyards in Douglas County alone (Reedsport Machine, North River Boats and Fred Wahl Marine Construction), as well as half a dozen supporting businesses, would be directly impacted by this legislation if allowed to go forward as proposed.

Currently the language proposed by the OPPA states that ports would be allowed to:  
***"Acquire, construct, maintain and operate facilities for construction, repairing or maintaining any type of watercraft."***

The word, "operate" would set a precedent for Oregon Revised Statutes (ORS) 777.210 by changing the intent of this section. Currently the term is used to describe the types of facilities that can be developed and maintained in support of each port's respective industries; however, this new provision would afford ports the ability to create businesses that will directly compete with the same. Granted no business can pick its competitors but, as special districts, ports have an advantage over private competitors with tax revenues, personal property tax exemptions and support organizations such the OPPA and Special Districts Association of Oregon (SDAO) all on their side.


We respectfully request that your Port Commissioners review this matter and decide if the word "operate" should be included in this bill. If you agree that it should be removed, please contact the OPPA and your local legislative representative.

Sincerely,

DOUGLAS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

  
Chris Boice, Chair

  
Gary Leif, Commissioner

  
Tim Freeman, Commissioner