

Horning Geosciences

808 26th Avenue, Seaside, OR 97138

Ph./FAX: (503)738-3738

Email: horning@pacifier.com



March 1, 2017

To: Co-Chairs of the Natural Resources Subcommittee on Ways and Means

From: Thomas S. Horning, Seaside City Councilor and Natural Hazards Consultant

Re: Senate Bill 5527

I am writing to support continued funding of the Department of Land, Conservation, and Development and SB 5527. This organization serves the City of Seaside and other coastal communities in long-term planning and introduction to relevant new initiatives, bringing to bear excellent skills and abilities and a breadth of knowledge to help the communities make the best decisions possible. I recommend continued support of the budget.

Seaside is embarking on an aggressive planning effort to respond to the upcoming Cascadia earthquake and tsunami. The city is the most at-risk community along the coast for tsunami flooding. Modeling by state and academic researchers indicate that over 90 percent of the homes and businesses in Seaside will be destroyed by the tsunami. Many lives are at risk. We will soon undertake a process of goal-setting, community engagement, and construction with every intention of improving rapid evacuation over bridges that need to be replaced or created as soon as possible. In addition, the city is going through Urban Growth Boundary expansion proceedings, and the DLCDC has played an important role along with private consultants in assisting in the process. As a former planning commissioner, I was involved in helping to lay out where future urban expansion should go. Our goal has been to site as much future growth above the XXL tsunami run-up line to enable survival of homes and apartments, which will serve as refuges for displaced citizens. New issues have cropped up that DLCDC staff have helped address, such as possible leap-frogging of otherwise buildable land in former agricultural neighborhoods that will be stripped clean by the tsunami. These remain unresolved at the present time.

Seaside, Gearhart, Clatsop Plains, Cannon Beach, Manzanita, Pacific City, and north Alsea Bay all are communities that must contend with dune growth and grading questions. I assist these communities professionally in developing dune grading and replanting plans. We are at a point in time where non-native European beach grass has invaded to the point that it causes dunes to build as much as 2 to 3 ft per year, requiring periodic regrading in order to maintain views of the ocean. Planning needs to address moving dune sand back into the surf without causing adverse impacts to intertidal life in the swash zone, otherwise we are forced to pile the graded sand on the upper beach, forcing the dune complex into public recreation space. This is unsustainable. I foresee changes to each community's Dune Management Plan. The DLCDC will be needed to help work through these issues.

Most importantly, issues will arise that we have not anticipated. Having at our disposal capable staff to respond to our needs is a necessity. Thank you for considering this input. Please regard it as public testimony in support of a capable and responsive planning arm of the state government for special needs of the coastal communities.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Thomas S. Horning". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Thomas S. Horning, Certified Engineering Geologist
Horning Geosciences
Seaside City Councilor, Ward 3