

Testimony in support of SB 867
Senate Committee on Business and Transportation
Commissioner Terry Thompson

Chair Beyer, Members of the Committee,

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of Senate Bill 867. For the record, my name is Terry Thompson. Many of you know me as a former legislator, current Lincoln County Commissioner.

I was born and raised in Newport as a member of a 2nd generation commercial fishing family. I bought my first commercial fishing vessel right after high school and have owned and operated 8 more over the course of the last fifty years, making a living fishing salmon, shrimp, tuna, groundfish and crab.

As a member of the fishing industry, I've seen the role the maritime sector plays in our economy and I have been a part of ongoing conversations about the sector and our need for a skilled workforce prepared to work on boat and on dock. Whenever I've been a part of formal and informal discussions about coastal needs, the lack of workforce has come up, so last year Commissioner Doug Hunt and I brought together a group of diverse stakeholders to find out whether pursuing a Maritime Workforce strategy made sense.

Not only did our group say yes, we went on to have a long and spirited discussion about the path forward.

This group of stakeholders which we are calling "The Maritime Workforce Solutions Group" includes Oregon Coast and Clatsop Community Colleges, OSU, private sector businesses and ports, elected leaders, three local workforce boards, several public agencies, local economic development districts, Regional Solutions from the Governor's office, as well as several legislators.

As a group, we have continued to meet and are committed to elevating and supporting the sector, focusing our initial efforts on the on-board and on-dock aspects of the sector, but we know the sector is much larger and that it has a large economic impact. We need this task force to help define all that is included in the sector.

The bill before you is one part of the strategy we have developed together which includes:

- Raising awareness about the relatively unknown maritime sector – which is one of the things SB 867 will help us accomplish
- Building the data for this sector as necessary
- And taking action on the ground by supporting the Clatsop Community Maritime Training College QMED program; building the partnerships between Clatsop Community College, Oregon Coast Community College and OSU including finding resources to provide mutually supportive programming; and working with the state employment department to support training efforts first on the coast and hopefully around the state

Now, it's my pleasure to introduce:

Captain Rick Williams, retired Navy Captain and consultant with Leidos, an international company offering scientific, engineering, systems integration, and technical services to a number of sectors. Rick is going to describe the need and tell us why we need to examine and define the sector.

Bud Shoemake is the top Manager for the Port of Toledo, who is going to share more about the private sector's need and their perspective on this legislation.

And lastly, I'll introduce **Captain Bill Antilla**, the MERTs instructor with Clatsop Community College, and **Brigitte Ryslinge**, President of Oregon Coast Community College, who are going to share the important role workforce training plays in preparing folks to work in this high-wage field.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today. We would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Respectfully,

Terry Thompson
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