

Dear Senators:

My name is Kyle Cox and I own Tarheel Aluminum located at the Port of Charleston. We build and repair boats, and have a lot of concerns about House Bill 2902. House Bill 2902 would authorize ports to operate boatyards for construction, repair and maintenance of boats. This would allow public ports to engage in unfair competition with private businesses such as mine. This industry is thriving due to private entrepreneurs and hard working people such as my dad, Ray Cox owner of Giddings Boatworks and that hard working attitude has been passed down to me. I fully intend to be in this industry for a long time to come, I intend to grow my business and take care of my customers. Generally public ports have provided haul out facilities to lift boats out of the water and put them on the ground for others to repair and maintain. I have no problem with allowing ports to operate haul out facilities, but permitting ports to compete directly with private sector businesses is bad for current private sector boatyards and for private sector jobs as well as the economy. As a growing business and a person directly in harms way due to this bill I respectfully ask that you vote no on HB 2902, or consider amending the bill to prevent unfair competition with private businesses. Authorizing the ports to compete for boat repair, maintenance and construction work will prevent private boat building and maintenance businesses from investing, could put private businesses out of work, and could prevent new boatyard operations from coming to Oregon. If this bill passes it would make me reluctant to invest in my business due to the fear of being overrun by government that doesn't have to turn a profit to provide services. At a time when our government is falling even more into debt we do not need to create more tax subsidized jobs, especially jobs in which the private sector has a very long great standing history of providing for! I know very well that this bill will not directly affect any one of you voting today but please, I implore you to listen to the hard working, tax paying leaders in the marine industry and vote no on HB 2902.

Thank you for your attention to this issue.