

SJM 7 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Carrier: Rep. Gomberg

House Committee On Veterans and Emergency Preparedness

Action Date: 05/16/17
Action: Be Adopted.
Vote: 7-0-1-0
Yeas: 7 - Esquivel, Evans, Lewis, Lively, Meek, Parrish, Post
Exc: 1 - Boone
Fiscal: No fiscal impact
Revenue: No revenue impact
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WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Urges Congress to permanently and adequately fund and maintain United States Coast Guard air facility in Newport, Oregon.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Similar joint memorial passed in 2015
- Land and sea rescue capacity
- Necessity of rapid response in cold water rescues
- Location of air facility outside tsunami zone
- Commercial and charter fishing operations in Newport and Depoe Bay

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

Newport, Oregon is home to one of the state's three deep draft ports, the state's largest-grossing commercial fishing fleet, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Pacific Marine Operations Center, Oregon State University research personnel and vessels, and robust recreational and sport fishing industries. Moreover, Lincoln County as a whole attracts a substantial share of the state's tourists and recreational visitors.

The United States Coast Guard maintains search and rescue and law enforcement operations out of Yaquina Bay with air support located at the Newport Municipal Airport. The station responds to hundreds of calls for assistance every year, and is a longstanding, embedded member of the coastal and regional community. Among the Coast Guard's three facilities on the Oregon coast with air operations, the Newport site is the only one located outside of the tsunami inundation zone.

The Coast Guard's air operations have been threatened with closure since 2014. A broad coalition of federal, state and local public officials, citizens, commercial industries and community groups have sustained efforts to preserve the Coast Guard's air facility in Newport. Senate Joint Memorial 7, urging Congress to adequately fund and maintain the United States Coast Guard air facility in Newport in perpetuity, is the product of these efforts.