



To: Members of the Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources
From: Paige Spence, Oregon Conservation Network
Date: January 29, 2019

RE: Support for SB 256

Good afternoon Chair Dembrow and Committee members:

Bipartisan issue today and in the past. Today thank Sen Roblan and his colleagues for testifying and supporting this bill today.

As we heard from our coastal caucus legislators, offshore drilling could have very significant impacts to our coastal economies, particularly shellfishing, crabbing, and fishing. Years later after the Deepwater Horizon spill in the Gulf Coast, a 2018 study finds that oysters likely suffered toxic effects not only from the oil itself, but from the oil dispersant Corexit® 9500 when it was used to clean up that oil spill. I can tell you that when I visited my family in Georgia over Christmas, though it's years after that spill, I still declined to share the oysters my dad ordered at dinner. I know we don't want our visitors to the Oregon coast to turn down our delicious coldwater oysters.

Having touched on the economic impacts, because I am with the OLCV, I would be remiss in noting that of course any time oil drilling is mentioned, you know there's going to be talk of its environmental impacts. When it comes to offshore oil drilling, that talk is even more heated, since you're not just digging underground but also thousands of feet underwater.

Whenever oil is recovered from the ocean floor, other chemicals and toxic substances come up too -- things like mercury, lead and arsenic that are often released back into the ocean, which can harm fish and wildlife. In addition, seismic waves used to locate oil can harm sea mammals and disorient whales.

In conclusion, I urge you to schedule a work session for this bill and move it out of committee. Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paige Spence".

Paige Spence
Oregon Conservation Network Director
Oregon League of Conservation Voters