



OREGON SHORES
CONSERVATION COALITION

To: Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources

April 3, 2019

Dear Chair Dembrow and members of the Committee:

The Oregon Shores Conservation Coalition very strongly opposes Senate Bill 961. If we have not weighed in on this before, it is because we hoped that legislators would understand the value of our public shoreline and the importance of Goal 18 in protecting its integrity, and give the bill no notice. Given that the bill has received a work session, we are stepping forward to urge that it go no further.

Oregon Shores, which emerged from the campaign to pass the Oregon Beach Bill, has worked for nearly 48 years to preserve our public shoreline resources. Oregon has avoided constant controversy over where the public shoreline was delimited, and where it could be intruded upon, by defining the “Statutory Vegetation Line” in the legislation, and establishing clear guidelines as to which properties were eligible for shoreline armoring through Goal 18 regulations. We believe that it would be very dangerous to this effective system of shoreline management that has prevailed for decades to weaken these clear guidelines and make them more ambiguous.

Our contention, then, is that the details of the case that apparently gave rise to this legislation aren’t the issue. The fundamental concern is that weakening the standards that have worked for all these years, and saved Oregon from constant battles over our public shoreline, could create an endless series of problems that will distract the state from good shoreline management and could lead to serious harm to the public interest. In layperson’s vernacular, we urge you not to open this can of worms. Please do not advance this bill any further.

Sincerely,

Phillip Johnson, Executive Director

In Oregon, the beaches belong to the people

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