

Good afternoon, for the record I am Cam Williams, the Coast Committeeman for the International Longshore Workers Union. I live and work in San Francisco, California.

The ILWU proudly represents the men and women working in the Oregon port system along with workers of differing worksites including the iconic Powell's Book Store in NW Portland.

The Port of Newport is an important piece of the puzzle not just for Oregon, but for the entire West Coast port system. This port cannot operate in a vacuum as a single, local-only entity. It is a public port, and as such, is a part of an overall port system in Oregon that is in place for the entire state. It cannot and should not exist for one single industry, but for all industries and business in Oregon to utilize.

Geographically the Port of Newport is strategically located to serve Oregon importers and exporters. It is one of three deep water Ports along the coast, the other two being Astoria along the North Oregon Coast and Coos Bay to the south. Given its central coast location the PON is underutilized as a potential import and export shipping center.

Port of Newport opportunities need to be explored and expanded and not limited to any single industry. For example, PON is a traditional export center for timber and lumber products. The Port of Newport should not be limited to log exports but can also host a variety of other timber-related products such as Christmas trees, wood chips and other finished products. Currently these products are being shipped from Longview, Seattle and ports located long distances from their origin, adding unnecessary transportation costs and contributing to dangerous traffic congestion in the I-5 Corridor.

The ILWU shares the frustration of local businesses, citizens and elected officials. Millions of tax dollars were invested in upgrades, new construction and modernization by the state of Oregon, federal government and local taxpayers to the International Terminal to return the PON to a multi-use facility. We share your frustration over a port that has stumbled in finding stable leadership, six directors in less than 10 years, financial losses and a failure to maintain the Port's infrastructure and no ability to build reasonable reserves to repair, replace and maintain port assets — including viable commercial fishing docks capable of meeting the needs of a modern fishing industry. We share your goals of having a transportation system that includes alternatives that build business opportunities while also reducing transportation costs, congestion and unnecessary associated costs.

For example, there have been multiple attempts to secure contracts with Oregon businesses to ship products out of the PON. Every attempt has been met with artificial obstacles created to stop the use by any industry other than those currently in control. Shockingly, the newly elected Port Commission rejected the

federal \$2 million TIGER grant awarded in Oregon, embarrassing local state and federal elected officials who lobbied heavily for these funds as a part of their overall economic development plan for the mid-coast and Newport community. These thwarted efforts have kept the PON from becoming a profitable enterprise and instead has become a barrier to economic development and job creation. Our multi-generational longshore worker members have been forced to leave their home port in order to find work in other ports in Oregon and Washington. This has created economic hardships and extended time away from their homes and families.

For your information we have attached several pages titled "Action Plan" from the BergerAbam Strategic Business & Capital Improvement Plan completed in March 2019. These pages identify the top Port of Newport priority projects. It includes projects, timelines and potential funding sources. For your convenience we have added the project costs found in a different section of the BergerAbam (copy included). The total cost of these priority projects, which we generally support, is \$31,647,000. While the needs of the Port are indisputable, what is not clear is how the Port intends to reach these lofty goals without a business plan that includes robust shipping *along with* the fishing industries that currently dominate both the Port and the decision makers on the Commission.

The ILWU recognizes that the fishing industry is vital to the Oregon economy and needs to be accommodated. However, the PON must also honor its commitment to other industries that wish to co-exist with the fishing fleet. This will improve and diversify the port's usage and the local area's economy.

We urge the Committee to support HB 2284 with the -1 amendment for passage and approval by the Governor.