

Caroline Burdick
Crater Renaissance Academy
655 N 3rd St
Central Point, OR 97502

Joint Committee on Ways & Means
Subcommittee on Natural Resources
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

March 26, 2021

Dear Senator Kathleen Taylor, Representative Jeff Reardon and members of the Committee,

The South Slough National Estuarine Research Reserve is located in the Coos estuary where it provides valuable public recreation and learning opportunities for Oregon residents and visitors, as well as conducts important monitoring and research to better understand and manage coastal watersheds and estuaries.

I am pleased to support Senate Bill 5539 because it provides necessary operational funding for the Department of State Lands, including the South Slough National Estuarine Research Reserve.

As a teacher in southern Oregon, my students are geographically and financially very limited to study ecosystems locally, so opportunities to explore areas beyond our backyard are incredibly important.

For the past couple of years (prior to COVID), I've taken my high school Ecology students to visit the South Slough Estuary, and they learned valuable forestry skills and compared the diverse ecosystems of the Slough to our Mediterranean climate and mountainous ecoregion. Once we have more freedom to travel post-COVID, I intend to bring my students up every year and participate in each of their high school programs.

I encourage the Committee to pass SB 5536 to continue support of the South Slough Reserve and its important work.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Caroline Burdick". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name and title.

Caroline Burdick
Ecology Teacher