

Dear Honorable Chair, and Members of the House Rules Committee

I write to ask you to halt further consideration of HB3382.

HB 3382 is a poorly written bill and should not be allowed to move further in the legislative process. After widespread outcry throughout the state, the proposed legislation was amended to reduce its focus from all deep-water ports to one: the Port of Coos Bay. That change in focus clearly daylights the original intent of this legislation as a highly orchestrated effort to double the size of the Federal Navigation Channel in Coos Bay. The justification for this effort is to accommodate a proposed container port. The legislation is a threat to Oregon land use regulations, and the critical nature of role of estuaries to serve as a nursery for important fish and wildlife populations, protection from climate change, and area of carbon sequestration, not to mention protection for communities from the risks of tsunamis. The amended bill focuses the threats solely on the Coos Bay estuary, the largest estuary in Oregon. This action sets precedence for further disregard of land use regulations.

Section 4. of HB 3382 suggests that since the Act is “necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, and safety, an emergency is declared to exist, and the Act takes effect on its passage.” What is the emergency? Who can determine emergency? The emergency is that HB 3382 was railroaded through the joint committee on Transportation by developers from out of state that appear to be ignorant and disrespectful of our public involvement process and regulations. Oregon estuary management plans are developed and implemented within county and city entities and evaluated for compliance with the Coastal Zone Management and within the Goals of Oregon Land Management. The ports are only a part of the public process and should not have the authority to subvert Oregon’s Statewide Land Use Planning Goals.

Many dozens of private citizens and experts regarding the transportation sector have pointed out at hearings the lack of national and regional need for a proposed container port that appears to be the driver of this effort. Recent studies have shown that Oregonians are clearly supportive of environmental protection over private developmental concerns.

I am a long-time member of the League of Women Voters, Coos County (LWVCC). For the past 2 years, I have served as chair of a committee studying the International Port of Coos Bay. The LWVCC has conducted studies of the Port of Coos Bay since the early 1960s with previous updates provided at approximately 20-year intervals: 1962; 1981; and 2000. Our study team evaluated multiple resources available online and in print regarding the history of the Port and the state, federal and local laws, regulations and policies regarding the Port. Members of our Committee have provided testimony at hearings and have provided information for many concerned citizens regarding this proposed legislation.

Details of the study are provided on our website, and we have resources that can help you to understand why your role should be to stop this bill from moving on to the floor.

<https://my.lwv.org/oregon/coos-county/article/international-port-coos-bay-study-finished>. I urge you to familiarize yourself with the process that has occurred so far to push the bill through and call a pause, stop this bill moving forward in this legislative session.

With regards, and thank you for consideration,

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