

Submitter: Hannah Kullberg

On Behalf Of: Oregon Coastal Visitors Association- HB2909

Committee: House Committee On Economic Development and Small Business

Measure: HB2909

The food systems work of the OCVA is of the most innovative, ground-up work I have seen. They are building bridges with organizations and producers. All of Oregon should look to their work. The state should invest in their work as a model for the state. The state should invest in their work so that we can move towards resilient food systems where we feed our state's populace from our state's bounty.

By way of example, in a current collaboration with OCVA and the OSU Food Innovation Center to support local sea vegetable producers, we are working with 10 local Oregon food businesses on new product ideation and development featuring Oregon red dulse seaweed, a carbon negative vegetable and nutrient dense Oregon specialty crop. In an effort to help market these businesses and new products, OCVA is also supporting a producer-led "Winter Waters" partnership with local chefs, restaurants, and the Oregon Kelp Alliance. This new, cutting edge educational culinary sales event series connects the curiosity and creativity of consumers and producers, with a goal to support new sales of these new and existing Oregon-made food products and Oregon's local, sustainable and regenerative seafare.

HB2909 is timely for collaborations such as these. While Oregon's creative chefs and local food makers are hungry to use new and local ingredients, supply shortages, lack of adequate production and food manufacturing space, and high costs of distribution remain a well-documented barrier to production, especially for rural, women and BIPOC food businesses. This bill can provide critical funding to help OCVA and partners address the infrastructure needs of small scale and start up food producers on the rural Oregon Coast, and will help alleviate supply-chain constraints, which currently create a bottleneck between supply and demand.

I am a food processor with the Business Oregon funded project, Community Co-Pack, where we process and pack amazing cultural food products for BIPOC and Women-led businesses. Since launching a year ago, we have received over 200 requests for co-packing, many of which we cannot serve due to scale or product. Several of these are seafare – seaweed we could not dehydrate, tiny fish we could not tin, fish sauce we could not ferment. OCVA is working to build a similar co-pack processing model on the coast to support coastal entrepreneurs and the unique needs of seafare processing.

I support HB2909 and strongly encourage others to do the same.

Hannah Kullberg, representative of Oregon's small food processors via the PNW

Food & Beverage Group and Community Co-Pack NW.
Hannah@communitycopacknw.com
503-970-8045