



P. O. Box 1210,
Turner, OR 97392
www.oregonaquaculture.org

25 January 2023

Senator Jeff Golden, Chair (Sen.JeffGolden@oregonlegislature.gov)
Senate Committee on Natural Resources
900 Court St NE, S-421,
Salem, OR, 97301

Subject: Public Hearing for SB 89-1 (January 25, 2023)

Dear Chairman Golden,

The Oregon Aquaculture Association (OAA) commented at length last month on what was initially called *The Oregon Aquaculture Act*: LC 3132 (please see our letter of December 15, 2022), this later becoming HB 2655. The elements from HB 2655 have now been proposed for incorporation into SB 89-1. **OAA is strongly opposed to this change.** We do support SB 89 and the legislation's initial aim of undertaking a study of aquaculture coordinated through the Oregon Department of Agriculture as aquaculture is agriculture. We believe this study would lay the foundation for factual, science-based knowledge regarding aquaculture in Oregon—the lack or inaccessibility of such vetted information seemingly one of the reasons for the abundance of incorrect and misleading statements and messaging appearing throughout the text of the former HB 2655 and now proposed for insertion into the amended version of SB 89-1.

Given the preponderance of this inaccurate reporting, OAA and her colleagues and partners would very much like to testify to the Senate Committee on Natural Resources to offer insights from those practically engaged in the state program in teaching, research, outreach, production, and a variety of other functions. Concurrently, we plan to carefully assess the content and veracity of the aquacultural legislation as it moves forward; ready to offer reliable and unbiased details about Oregon's current aquaculture program and its potential as evaluated by top practitioners in the field. We were disappointed that the groups proposing this bill did not reach out to the industry, Oregon scientists, and other experts to discuss their concepts to ensure they were credible and would lead to improvements in public welfare. We are confident there are growing opportunities for responsible aqua farming that will make important contributions to the state's seafood supply while having a noticeably positive impact on economic growth and employment.

As all Oregonians, OAA and its membership and affiliates are committed to safeguarding our state's unique natural resources while ensuring the highest possible quality of life for our fellow residents. We are, moreover, totally convinced that responsible aquaculture can be a valuable asset that optimizes the use of these resources and the benefits to this citizenry while maintaining a relatively small ecological footprint; often leading to net positive gains in water productivity.

Please let us know if you have any question or if we can be of any service. We look forward to discussing more with the Committee in the near future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Clinton J. Bentz".

Clint Bentz, President
Oregon Aquaculture Association