

Floyd E. Holcom Testimony for the 2023, SB 200, READY THE CHIEF!

Co-Chair Senator Manning; Co-Chair Senator Thatcher, Senators: Gorsek, Linthicum, and Woods, thank you for allowing me to Testify with all of you on behalf of the Support of SB 200, and #ReadytheChief.

Please Play Video: <https://youtu.be/JfDOqJJYjg>

As you can see, the Emergency Situation hasn't changed. Your fellow Senators and past Senators have passed and moved these past Bills, SB 678, SB 826 and now SB 200, in which I ask that these historical testimonies be preserved and read into this new Bill SB 200. I Believe, The Previous Bills were successfully forwarded to the Ways and Means Committee twice in the last 6 years, from this and the Oregon Senate Transportation and this Senate Committee On Veterans, Emergency Management, Federal and World Affairs, with unanimous votes and recommendations. But, it is important for you to Know Why! Essentially the only major fact that has changed, is that the cost of repairs and upgrades to the Salvage Chief, have increased.

The above factual infomercial, with the letters and e-mails, sent to each and everyone of you by the Emergency Managers, Engineers, Doctors and Lawyers, Students and Citizens of each of your districts identify the importance of this critical importance of SB 200. The researched reports, testimony and reality of efficient and low-cost Dollar for Dollar readiness, it's the best and only chance we have in meeting these short-term disaster challenges that our emergency disaster managers, transportation and infrastructure experts are predicting, especially on the Oregon Coast, Columbia River from Astoria to Lewiston, Idaho, as well as both sides of our Boarder. Outside of COVID, Cascadia Subduction, and the strong possibilities of Compromised and choked off Shipping with Economics in the multiple Billions of lost Dollars, Oregon needs to train and prepare for this disastrous event that will be far worse than Mt. St. Helens, and the Salvage Chief can meet this mission, on its water highway, with our combined assistance.

Today, I ask that all of you on this committee support this bill and forward it to the Ways and Means Committee, where I'm told this Bill will continue to receive its needed additional and continued support for passage.

Like your colleagues have told me, its one of those Bills that just makes sense. Attached are those Committees Report.

This Senate Bill emphasizes the "here and now" needs on the Columbia River.

1. The critical transportation on the Columbia River Highway is extremely vulnerable. The Boarder Bridges that cross the river highway, as ODOT calls them, currently have no removal plan and can not sustain the loads of a major Earthquake, in some cases lower than an 8.1 earthquake could shut down the Columbia River Transportation system. That answer has not changed in the last several years and it may not ever change. Given these bridges collapse into the Columbia and Willamette Rivers, and in an Emergency, the Salvage Chief is right here in Oregon, and will be the cooperative tool our local, National and State experts can use to perform the clearing operations needed to get these systems back up and functioning. There is no other Vessel available like the Salvage Chief, and there are none being built like it in the near future.
2. Outside of the Salvage Chief, there are no near term solutions for readiness on the Columbia River, meaning no real sustainability solution in case of a disaster. And given everyday that the ships anchor in our river, The Salvage Chief stays ready to be called upon, like it has since 1949, but it needs the support of its State to maintain that readiness until something takes its place. And again, right now, there is nothing outside of the Chief. The USCG will Evacuate, the Major Emergency Plans have evacuation plans to Redmond and Yakima, with very little depth of how that is going to happen when this thing hits.

We can be resilient in the transportation emergency challenges of tomorrow with the Salvage Chief and given all of that, there are very few requests that you receive in these committees that has already saved and invested more than 50 Million Dollars in Private funds in Oregon this last 40 plus years, and the request for 2.9 Million of public funds to get it ready is an investment for the continued training, survival and connectivity to keep both our Rural and Urban citizens alive as well as continuing the direct support of Oregon shipyard Workers. For this ship and our State to be truly ready, it needs the Passage of SB 200.

In the Words of a former USCG Captain of the Port: “How Much would it cost to build a Ship like the Salvage Chief Today, (USCG Answer: North of 200 Million, Sir)” “Mr. Holcom, How Much would it take to get the Salvage Chief back up and Running? (Holcom Answer: Sir, with State Support and Donations, around 1.9-2 Million, Spent Locally. 2020)” “I guess we Know the Answer, Ready the Chief!”.

Thank you. Floyd E. Holcom, 100 39th Street, Astoria, Oregon 97103