



March 13, 2023

Joint Transportation Committee
900 Court Street NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

Re: Opposition to SB 3382 - Please Don't Exempt Ports for Local and State Regulations Meant to Protect our Communities and our Environment

Dear Chair Gorsek, Co-Chair McLain and members of the Joint Transportation Committee:

Since 1996, Willamette Riverkeeper (WR) has proudly served as the eyes, ears, and voice of the Willamette River. We believe that a river with excellent water quality and abundant habitat that is safe for fishing and recreation is a basic public right. Our mission is to protect, restore, and celebrate the Willamette River watershed.

Our mission includes engaging people with the Willamette River. WR hosts numerous events throughout the year, including public engagement programs such as our River Guardians monthly cleanup events, engaging hundreds of volunteers each year to help clean up our river.

We are writing to you today about House Bill 3382, which would exempt Ports in Portland, Astoria, Newport, Coos Bay, and Saint Helens from local and state land use laws when constructing, maintaining, or expanding facilities on land or in waterways associated with deep draft channel improvements. This vague and broadly written bill would allow Ports to bypass local and state laws meant to protect environmental health and community safety. It would allow Ports to bypass basic public process and involvement mechanisms. Ports would no longer be accountable to statewide planning goals, administrative rules, comprehensive plans, or local zoning requirements so long as a port could demonstrate that the project is "served by the navigation channel."

Ports are massive land owners that have tremendous impacts on our environmental health, community safety and livability, and our economy. The idea of broadly exempting Ports from local and state regulations is outrageous and should never have

seen the light of day. This legislation provides no rationale or explanation for these exemptions – it simply gives Ports a free pass to develop without constraint or accountability.

HB 3382 is an extreme and dangerous bill. The list of local and state regulations that could be waived is staggering and includes: public involvement requirements, environmental zoning to protect in-water, riparian and upland habitat, protections for floodplains and wetlands, protections for Oregon’s coastal zone, zoning restrictions to protect adjacent communities, dredging and dredge disposal regulations - the list goes on and on. This bill would have made it almost impossible to stop terrible projects like the development of West Hayden Island and Pembina Propane. It would have taken away some of the community's most important tools to stop new fossil fuel facilities.

Waiving these protections would give powerful ports and their powerful industrial allies the ability to simply trample long standing protections for our community and our environment.

Please do not move this bad bill out of committee.

Bob Sallinger
Urban Conservation Director
Willamette Riverkeeper
bob@willametteriverkeeper.org

Travis Williams
Riverkeeper and Executive Director
travis@willametteriverkeeper.org

Willamette Riverkeeper
1210 Center St. | Oregon City, OR 97214 | 503.223.6418
www.willametteriverkeeper.org