



HB 2969: Support 100 Percent Fish

March 12, 2025

Chair Nguyen, Vice-Chair Diehl, Vice-Chair Isadore and House Committee on Economic Development, Small Business and Trade Members:

The entire State of Oregon has a golden opportunity to create jobs and generate massive amounts of economic value by taking the discarded scraps from our seafood industry and making new products. HB2969 - with the dash-2 amendment - provides resources to help us support and facilitate the startup of these businesses. We urge you to support HB2969.

The 100 Percent Fish Utilization concept is not new. The Iceland Ocean Cluster (IOC) has been teaching us how they have developed new products that use fish waste in new and innovative ways. The IOC has been so successful that they are now able to, in many cases, transform a single \$12 fish into a \$4,700 value by producing non-food products. We can replicate these successes here across all of Oregon.

With the investment of HB2969, we will conduct research, development, invest in light infrastructure and implement resource coordination to replicate the successes of Iceland right here, in Oregon. Of course, Oregon-landed seafood will continue to be the primary aim of the Oregon Ocean Cluster work that Oregon Coast Visitors Association has undertaken. But we can now also use fish waste – typically discarded – to make high-value fish leathers, Nutraceuticals, medications, cosmetics and much more.

You might be wondering why a tourism organization cares. It's simple; our ocean resources are a primary value propositions for visitors. Diversifying and strengthening the Blue Economy through value-added product development allows us to derive more value from less resources. Imagine retail stores across Oregon featuring fish leather art, and Oregon fish leather apparel such as wallets, gloves, shoes, jackets, and pants. Imagine our health and wellness stores and retreat centers across Oregon featuring Nutraceuticals products on their shelves. Tourism organizations are built to market, and we have always turned visitors into life-long consumers of Oregon products.

In a study produced in 2023, we found that 90 percent of the seafood consumed on the Oregon Coast isn't from Oregon. By supporting efforts to shift that paradigm, while creating new value chain revenue streams for entrepreneurs, we can keep more local product here locally. Non-food products also can draw and benefit visitors, as we show pride in our Oregon-made wares. Oregon's economy is an ecosystem as well, and this effort will increase investment across the seafood industry, as well as science and research and light manufacturing. It's an investment with the potential to pay off for generations of Oregonians to come. We urge you to support HB 2969.

Sincerely,

Marcus Hinz, Executive Director
Oregon Coast Visitors Association