

Submitter: Laura Anderson
On Behalf Of: Local Ocean Seafoods
Committee: House Committee On Economic Development, Small Business, and Trade
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2969

Dear Chair Nguyen Vice Chairs and committee members:

It is with great enthusiasm that I ask you to support HB 2969 and 100% Fish Business Development in Oregon. As the founder of Local Ocean Seafoods, I understand first hand the economic challenges facing our small and large seafood businesses. In fact, just look to the North in Alaska to see the closure of many critical community based seafood processing plants in 2023 and 2024. We need to make sure that Oregon seafood producers do not follow that path and have a better opportunities-- and this bill will do that. Local Ocean and others are looking to 100% Fish utilization as a viable and smart way to increase revenue for our companies, create work opportunities in our communities and develop useful and beneficial products for society at large.

Seven years ago I visited the Icelandic Ocean Cluster and was blown away by the number of products they have created from what was previously regarded as a waste product. Their movement to spark business innovation around fish waste has shown that there can be more value in the side streams of cutting fish, than in the edible fillet itself. Seafood producers, including Local Ocean, leave 40-60% of the weight of the whole fish on the cutting room floor. The largest processors have access to the fish meal processing facilities, but smaller producers waste often ends up in landfills. We now know, from the Iceland experience, that we can take that waste and convert it into high value products, including food and beverages, nutraceuticals, biomedical products and more.

Local Ocean just hired its first 100% Fish Business Innovation Specialist to lead this effort for our company and be an example for others in the State. We know that some of the highest value products are going to take significant partnerships with laboratories and the medical sector. And it is also going take significant investment. We also know that our own waste will not be enough to make an impact for some of these new products, and that supply aggregation and joint ventures will be required. The Oregon Ocean Cluster is in a great position to catalyze these relationships for the seafood sector. I encourage you to vote YES on this bill.

Thank you
Laura Anderson
Local Ocean Seafoods, CFO and Founder