



SB 1525: Support the Blue Economy

Chair Sollman, Vice-Chair Brock Smith, and members of the Senate Committee on Energy and Environment:

I am writing to express my full support for Senate Bill 1525 the Blue Economy Task Force Bill, which would **create a** task force to explore, define and create a roadmap for developing the blue economy in Oregon.

As you know, tourism is a key economic driver on the Oregon Coast. As the Executive Director of the Oregon Coast Visitors Association – the destination management organization designated to serve the entire Oregon Coast from Astoria to Brookings-Harbor – I can tell you that the health of the ocean and our economic needs must be able to coexist. This is absolutely paramount to our ability to attract visitors, while remaining livable, viable communities for year-round residents.

SB 1525 will provide the science and economic data Oregon needs to support a healthy ocean and vibrant coastal economies. We are working with multiple partners to develop certain sectors of Oregon's Blue Economy through the following efforts:

- **Infrastructure:** creating coastal infrastructure to keep more Oregon seafood local. Real economic value is developed through the supply chain, where dollars are multiplied and jobs are created.
- **Product Development:** Pursuing 100 Percent Fish initiatives to utilize fish waste from food processing for creating additional value-added food and non-food products. This will build new kinds of products produced in Oregon, such as pharmaceuticals, nutraceuticals, fish leather, collagens, scientific and medical products and much more.
- **Visitor Experience:** Developing and promoting top-notch visitor culinary experience on the Oregon Coast.
- **Youth & Workforce Development:** Exposing hundreds of high school students to seafood butchery and seafood live tank technician curriculum.
- **Technical Assistance:** Administering “resource navigation” services for and tracking business support to ensure entrepreneurs can effective access the correct services.

But the Blue Economy can be even more in Oregon. It is time to explore these opportunities. SB 1593 will create a taskforce that includes a variety of business interests, including tourism, fisheries, blue economy business investors and many more to define what this means and study what other states and nations are doing successfully regarding the blue economy.

The group will identify existing initiatives to spot gaps and overlaps, and create strategies to address them. This work should lead to a Blue Economy Roadmap to chart Oregon's course in this endeavor.

With the invigorated focus Oregon is taking regarding economic development, this is an incredible way to include Oregon's coastal communities in the state's future economic prosperity.

For these and many other reasons that are vital to the coastal environment and economy, we urge you to support SB 1525.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Marcus Hinz".

Marcus Hinz, Executive Director
Oregon Coast Visitors Association