

Washington Coastal Marine Advisory Council

c/o Washington of Ecology SEA Program PO Box 47600 Olympia WA 98504-7600

The Honorable Representative Mike Chapman and
The Honorable Representative Tom Dent
House Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee
PO Box 40600
Olympia, WA 98504-0600

January 31, 2023

RE: Washington Coastal Marine Advisory Council Support for HB 1010

Dear Chairman Chapman and Ranking Member Dent,

The Washington Coastal Marine Advisory Council (WCMAC) is writing to you in support of HB 1010. WCMAC has served as a forum for a wide range of coastal stakeholders with a variety of interests for nearly a decade. It was created, in part, to provide recommendations to the Governor, Legislature, and state and local agencies on coastal resource management issues ([43.143.060 RCW](#)). The Council aims to recommend and support projects and initiatives that will strengthen coastal resilience and cultivate ongoing partnerships with agencies that help coastal communities address our most pressing challenges.

At WCMAC's December 2022 meeting, the Washington Department of Health (DOH) and Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) presented on HB 1010 and the Council came to consensus¹ on formally supporting this legislation. WCMAC recognizes that the regulatory authority provided to DOH through this bill is critical and necessary to build flexibility into management of the Dungeness crab fishery to avoid a complete closure in the future, while concurrently continuing to ensure public health and safety.

The proposed bill would give the DOH the authority to regulate commercial Dungeness crab fisheries with respect to public health and safety issues presented by marine biotoxins. The implementation of this bill would provide the flexibility to consider an alternative pathway such as requiring that crab be eviscerated rather than a complete closure of the Dungeness crab fishery, which would protect public health while preventing significant negative economic impact for coastal communities. The coastal commercial Dungeness crab fishery is one of the **most economically important fisheries in Washington state**. With an ex-vessel value of \$88 million in the most recent coastal Dungeness crab season (2021-2022), the fishery not only supports Dungeness crab fishermen but also Washington's coastal communities, creating as many as 900 jobs in fishing, processing, transportation, and support services.

¹ Due to agency restrictions on lobbying and their own internal processes for reviewing legislative bills, council members representing Washington State Agencies abstained from the decision to move forward with this letter of support.

Importantly, the bill gives the DOH, along with WDFW and the Washington State Department of Agriculture, the authority to coordinate flexible management responses for the commercial Dungeness crab fishery. The timeline for developing regulations allows for necessary engagement with stakeholders and tribal co-managers to establish a regulatory framework that will provide meaningful and enforceable options such as evisceration in the future.

WCMAC offers our full support for HB 1010 to ensure the people and economies of the Washington coast can be resilient, thrive, and continue to contribute strongly to the state's overall healthy economy.

Sincerely,



William "Rod" Fleck
Chair
WA Coastal Marine Advisory Council

CC:

- Tom McBride, Department of Fish and Wildlife
- Adam Eitmann, Department of Ecology
- Casey Dennehy, Department of Ecology
- Joe Laxson, WA Department of Health
- Members, Washington Coastal Marine Advisory Council