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NEWS RELEASE

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Fourth Annual Oregon Coast Economic Summit Convenes in Grand Ronde, Focuses on Education as a Pathway to Economic Development

Oregon Coastal Caucus members' co-host with small business leaders, federal, state, and local officials

GRAND RONDE – Leaders from across the state convened the Oregon Coast Economic Summit (OCES) today to discuss education, job creation and economic development in the Oregon coastal and rural regions. The theme of the two day Summit, held at the Spirit Mountain Casino in Grand Ronde, is “Education: The Pathway to Economic Development for Rural and Coastal Communities.” The Summit will highlight the collaborations needed to help students prepare for our state’s rapidly changing economy. This fourth annual event is hosted by the Coastal Caucus of the Oregon Legislature and brings together leaders from a diverse array of sectors from across Oregon.

With over 450 people expected in attendance—including Governor Kate Brown, Senator Ron Wyden, Congressman Peter DeFazio, Congresswoman Suzanne Bonamici, President Ed Ray of Oregon State University, and President Michael Schill of University of Oregon—the event comes as Oregon students and teachers return to the classroom for the 2015 school year.

“In my experience as an education leader and a member of the Coastal Caucus, I have seen firsthand the benefits of getting small business leaders, economic development professionals, and coastal community leaders in the same room with public universities, community colleges and state experts,” said Senator Arnie Roblan (D-Coos Bay). “These are the types of collaborative, public-private partnerships we need to have if we’re going to build a highly skilled workforce to support and expand the Oregon coast economy. Our rural communities continue

to struggle in the economic recovery being felt elsewhere in Oregon. We must give educators, small businesses and natural resource industries the tools they need to turn the crank on our economy and create jobs.”

This year’s OCES will feature a mix of expert presentations and panel discussions on a wide range of topics that recognize the unique economic diversity of Oregon’s coastal and rural communities. The facilitated discussions will explore opportunities to chart new courses in: post-secondary education and workforce development; trade and economic diversification; sustainable transportation and infrastructure needs; disaster resilience and preparedness; recreational and medical marijuana policies; public-private partnerships in job creation; sustainable management of our natural resource industries (timber, hatcheries, and fisheries); ocean acidification and hypoxia; and much more.

Member of the Legislature’s Coast Caucus said they and other participants hope to build on the success of this summit to continue strong collaboration in future years. In addition to Roblan, Coastal Caucus members include: Rep. Caddy McKeown (D-Coos Bay), Chair, Sen. Jeff Kruse (R-Roseburg), Vice-Chair, Rep. Deborah Boone (D-Cannon Beach), Rep. David Gomberg (D-Otis), Sen. Betsy Johnson (D-Scappoose), Rep. Wayne Krieger (R-Gold Beach), and Sen. Doug Whitsett (R-Klamath Falls).

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