



## **SEN. JOANNE VERGER**

### **STATE SENATOR, DISTRICT 5**

## **NEWS ADVISORY**

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CONTACT: Molly Woon (503) 367- 4327

### **Verger praises NOAA's selection of Newport, Ore. as home of the agency's Marine Operations Center in the Pacific**

COOS BAY, Ore.— Senator Joanne Verger (D-District 5), representing the Oregon coast from Lincoln City to Coos Bay, praised the selection today of the Port of Newport as the newest home of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association's Marine Operations Center in the Pacific.

"This is monumental news for our coast and for our state," said Verger. "Newport makes perfect sense as the home for these vessels considering the important research already happening in this community – specifically at the OSU Hatfield Marine Science Center."

Today's news will make Newport one of nine ports in the Pacific and Atlantic that NOAA's ships call home, four of which will be specifically tied to Newport. During the recently completed 2009 Legislative Session, lawmakers approved approximately \$20 million in bonding authority for infrastructure improvements in Newport to accommodate the port's bid to harbor NOAA vessels.

"Much of the success of our coastal communities is a product of close collaboration and putting our best foot forward," said Verger. "NOAA's selection of Newport is a prime example of that teamwork. The jobs, research, and development that this project brings will be a boost to both Oregon's coastal economy and our reputation as a leader in marine research."

The relocation to Newport is expected to happen in 2011 pending approval of a 20-year lease. NOAA states its mission as, "To understand and predict changes in Earth's environment and conserve and manage coastal and marine resources to meet our Nation's economic, social, and environmental needs."