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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Bill to assist our fishers and processors and limit regional closures of Crab harvest due to domoic acid moves forward

SALEM – A bipartisan bicameral piece of legislation; introduced and Chief Sponsored by Senator Roblan (D-Coos Bay) and Representative David Brock Smith (R-Port Orford) looks to better track crab and other marine base food susceptible to domoic acid and other food related issues that could pose a threat to human consumption.

“We have an ever-increasing frequency of domoic acid test results that have a negative impact on our coastal industries,” said Senator Roblan. “This is evident in the delay of this year’s crab season, as well as the recent closure on Friday due to high levels of domoic acid found in Brookings,” he said. “We have been working with our industries and agencies to come up with a better solution to protect our consumers, without having such a wide impact on our producers”.

SB 1550 looks to the location of the seafood caught and if a problem is discovered in one location, product data can be tracked to check nearby locations for a similar issue. If one is not found, area closures can be isolated and much smaller rather than have larger, regional closures like the current crab harvest closure that occurred last week from Cape Blanco to the border.

“Our crab fishers are struggling and so are their families,” said Representative David Brock Smith, whose District is affected by the recent closure. “With the delay in opening of the Crab Season due to elevated levels of domoic acid, and now the regional closure off southwest Oregon, our fishers are being hit extremely hard and this bill couldn’t come soon enough for them,” said Brock Smith. “This tracking and data collection will help isolate the affected areas and allow more certainty to ODA on localized closures,” he said. “This legislation will also allow for more flexibility in evisceration orders, while keeping the public safe and helping our fishing industries continue to be successful.”

SB 1550 is expected to pass the Senate Floor on Monday and move to Representative David Brock Smith’s House Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources on Wednesday to be worked on his side of the Capitol.

Rep. David Brock Smith represents House District 1, which includes Curry, Coos, Douglas and Josephine counties. This press release and an archive of previous press releases issued by Rep. David Brock Smith’s office are available on the web at: www.oregonlegislature.gov/smithd.