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*Hello fellow ocean lovers!*

## Ⓢ Ocean Lobby Day

In English, we have an expression “April showers bring May flowers” — suggesting that early spring rains help produce the lovely blooms and foliage that follow. This past month, conservationists from 37 different organizations, including COARE, “rained” down on California’s capitol in Sacramento for an organized day of lobbying efforts. COARE was directly involved in 13 of the 73 meetings held that day, making a difference in educating California’s leaders that intelligent ocean-conservation-focused marine policy must be a priority for our State and for the nation.

We’re looking forward to seeing the policies that bloom as a result of our efforts.



COARE with other Ocean Day participants at the California State Capitol

## Ⓢ Shark Fin Bans

Speaking of conservation policy, it’s been another thrilling month for legislative efforts. After a slight, clarifying amendment was made in the House of Representatives, the Washington State shark fin ban (SB 5688) had to return to the Senate for a re-vote (called concurrence). The same overwhelming 47–0 unanimous vote was cast, and now the bill is on the Governor’s desk. We spoke with her office again on Friday, and expect to have exciting news for you within the next two weeks.

The controversy over California’s version of the shark fin ban, Assembly Bill (AB) 376, continues to simmer, but the opposing arguments of racial injustice are simply unfounded. Please continue to support our efforts by spreading the action link:

[www.coare.org/act/ab376](http://www.coare.org/act/ab376)

We’re expecting the next reading of the bill and the floor vote to come soon, so if you’re a California resident, please be sure to contact your Assemblymember and let him/her know that you support AB376. By spending five minutes to call your legislator, you can help protect millions of sharks.

On Friday, 29 April, Oregon’s House Bill 2838 met with overwhelming and unanimous favor. The House of Representatives voted 44–0 to pass the bill on to the Senate for further consideration. COARE has been working closely with Representative Witt’s office (the Bill’s author) to show support for this legislation. If you live in Oregon, please visit the following link to see how you can help: [www.coare.org/act/hb2838](http://www.coare.org/act/hb2838)

## 🕒 Blue Vision Summit

In another two weeks, you can join us with Senator Sheldon Whitehouse, Dr. Jane Lubchenco, Sylvia Earle, Admiral Thad Allen, Celine Cousteau, Carl Safina, Barton Seaver, Ralph Nader, Louie Psihoyos, Jim Toomey, and hundreds of other blue heroes to help turn the tide for healthy seas at the Blue Vision Summit and Capitol Hill Ocean Day in Washington D.C.

Come work with hundreds of ocean leaders and also be part of the 4th annual Peter Benchley Ocean Awards (honoring seven outstanding individuals, including President Laura Chinchilla of Costa Rica).

For more information, and to register, visit:  
[www.bluefront.org/blue\\_vision\\_blog/welcome/](http://www.bluefront.org/blue_vision_blog/welcome/)

## 🕒 Santa Clara County Bag Ban

On Tuesday, 26 April, COARE joined four other organizations (Californians Against Waste, Clean Water Action, Save the Bay, and the Committee for Green Foothills), at the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors meeting to testify in favor of a proposed ban of single-use bags. The ban was adopted by a vote of 4-1, and the San Jose Mercury News even quoted our Executive Director in its coverage:  
[www.mercurynews.com/peninsula/ci\\_17933322](http://www.mercurynews.com/peninsula/ci_17933322)

Santa Clara County is the most populous county in the greater San Francisco Bay Area, and this ban, affecting the unincorporated areas of the county, will help save an estimated 608,000 bags from entering the waste stream each year.



Christopher Chin testifying in favor of banning single-use plastic bags.

The ban takes a two step approach, first limiting free distribution to plastic bags that are at least 2.25 mils thick, and then strengthening the definition of “reusable bag” the following year.

## 🕒 Earth Day

On Saturday, 16 April, our colleagues at the Marine Science Institute in Redwood City, California, held an event in celebration of Earth Day, and they asked us to join the festivities.

The Marine Science Institute is an excellent educational nonprofit that is dedicated to putting students in direct physical contact with their local bay environment in order to cultivate their natural sense of curiosity while enriching their understanding of science. We were thrilled to be invited back to their annual Earth Day on the Bay event (and this year, to celebrate their 40th anniversary)!

The event was a huge success — adults and children of all ages enjoyed the discovery aquarium (filled with fish of all different kinds, crabs, eels, and snails, among other things), the arts and crafts activities, live music and entertainment, and canoe rides. They were even given a chance to collect mud and water samples and examine them under a microscope to identify organisms! It was clear to us that MSI’s dedication and enthusiasm for science was infectious. COARE was able to talk to a seemingly never-ending parade of children and adults about our message, and we’re very excited to welcome our new newsletter recipients!

Many thanks to Roxanne, Sara, and Tom for masterfully staffing the booth and entertaining and informing the throngs of eventgoers!

## 🕒 Dive & Travel Expo

Since we’re on the topic of the Pacific Northwest, we’d like to say hello to everyone we met at the Dive & Travel Expo in Tacoma, Washington last month. Many thanks to everyone who joined our mailing list and to those who signed our postcards in support of the Oregon shark fin bill.

Many special thanks go to our volunteer staff, whose help at the booth was invaluable: Kelly, Kiote, and Rachel. Thank you for helping us do what we do!