

From the Desk of  
Julie Parrish  
Julie



February 18, 2016

Oregon House of Representatives  
900 Court St., NE  
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Opposition to HB4146A

Members of the Oregon House of Representatives,

On behalf of the Tourism Development Council of Oregon's Mt. Hood Territory, the Destination Marketing Organization for Clackamas County, I wish to share our concerns with HB4146A.

A full 1% increase to the state's transient room tax (TRT) is problematic for a number of regional tourism partners across the state. But their very legitimate concerns have been largely ignored; both in discussions leading up to session and in the committee process. Reasonable compromises have been similarly dismissed.

We feel harm should not be done to one set of partners to benefit another when middle-ground options exist. A half of one percent (.5%) increase would provide enough funding to support the 2021 World Outdoor Championships while at the same time increasing the Oregon Tourism Commission's budget by 50 percent. We believe this would be generous, given that no needs assessments have been shared with partners, and no details have been proffered as to how the Commission plans to allocate the additional revenues.

In addition, we do not feel a Task Force is needed to reevaluate the Regional Cooperative Marketing Programs (RCMP). The RCMPs are effective collaborative efforts that bring together local tourism partners to collectively promote their region. Partners come together to create annual plans and then work together throughout the year to execute them. This approach allows regions to have a presence greater than the sum of its parts and allows smaller tourism destinations and partner's access to larger markets, media outlets, and tourism influencers they would otherwise be unable to access on their own.

We were pleased that the original bill included clarifying language regarding the portion of the state's TRT that goes towards the RCMP, from as "much as 15%" to "15%", but we are fearful that the interim workgroup introduced by adoption of the -7 amendments threatens the continuation of these collaborative programs.

We ask that you oppose HB4146A or amend it to address the above concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John A. Erickson", written over a horizontal line.

John A. Erickson  
Chairman, Oregon's Mt. Hood Territory  
cc: Clackamas County Legislative Delegation