



**Testimony by City of Wilsonville Mayor Tim Knapp Supporting HB 2768:**

***Proposed Legislation Provides Local Governments with Greater Flexibility on Promoting Tourism as Economic Development Driver***

Scheduled for public hearing on March 22, 2017, before the House Committee on Economic Development and Trade

**Chair Lininger, Vice-Chairs Marsh and Brock Smith, and Members of the Committee:**

On behalf of the City of Wilsonville City Council, I am testifying in support of HB 2768, which would expand the definition of tourism promotion to cover more than marketing expenses and facilitate the ability of local communities to focus resources on key areas of improvement that can benefit tourism as an economic-development tool.

As proposed under HB 2768, tourism promotion could include expenses for tourism activities, tourism-generating special events, sporting events and festivals. Public safety costs for such events are intended to be covered. In addition, the bill would cover expenses for developing or improving the visitor industry by enhancing tourist attractions, tourism-related facilities and special events. Tourism-related public amenities that could be funded include beautification projects, sidewalk improvements, benches, parking facilities and restrooms.

Expanding the scope of tourism promotion allows greater local determination of what a community needs to do make tourism a real economic-development driver. Rhetorically, speaking, what good is marketing a community as a tourism destination if visitor attractions are lacking or need improvement or if it the ability to stroll and window-shop in a downtown is unattractive, unsafe or uncomfortable?

The City of Wilsonville's Tourism Promotion Committee, composed of tourism-industry professionals, has been interested in broadening the scope of promoting tourism and using transient lodging tax revenues to develop tourism attractions for the non-summer months "shoulder season," especially targeted to high-school and amateur sporting events. The proposed legislation would allow our city and others to focus on what really needs to done locally to promote and develop tourism as a real community economic-development driver.

The City of Wilsonville respectfully urges a DO PASS vote on HB 2768. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tim Knapp".

Tim Knapp, Mayor  
City of Wilsonville