

## City of Rockaway Beach, Oregon

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March 22, 2017

Representative Ann Lininger  
House Economic Development and Trade Committee  
And Member of the Committee

Dear Representative Leninger and Committee,

On behalf of the City of Rockaway Beach I would like to testify in support of HB 2744 and HB 2768 which would expand the definition of "tourism – related facility", to cover more than marketing and media related expenses and allow local communities to use the local tax revenues in a manner that would benefit tourism by improving those facilities and infrastructure used when they visit the community.

Expanding the scope of tourism promotion would permit the Rockaway Beach Tourism Commission and City staff to have a heightened evaluation process to determine what the community needs to help drive the local tourism industry. Locally it has been noted that there has been a definite increase in tourism, but at what cost? If the passing of HB 2744 and HB 2768 would allow for more local spending on community infrastructure improvements the outcome clearly becomes a more enjoyable stay for visitors to the community. Improvements to signage boardwalks and sidewalks, hardscape features, parking facilities, public restrooms and other tourism facilities will only enhance tourists experience in the community.

The Rockaway Beach Tourism Commission, consisting of local merchants and business persons, have done an exemplary job at assisting in marketing Rockaway Beach, with a definite focus on the "shoulder season" with the help of Transient Room Tax revenue (TRT) collected by the City. In fiscal year 2016/2017, the City of Rockaway Beach has earmarked the use of \$400,550.00 TRT dollars specifically for marketing the "shoulder season" as well as using the funds on tourism facilities.

While existing law is clearly focused on both marketing and tourism facilities, the new laws would be much less restrictive by allowing the City to give this town the economic development force it needs to attract those tax paying visitors. It is believed that with increased infrastructure funding to enhance tourist attractions, tourism-related facilities, or tourism-generating special events with beautification projects a greater number of tourists would be attracted to this area. Moreover, by creating more attractions, tourists would be more likely to stay longer and return in the future. By allowing the City greater flexibility it will improve the tourists experience.

The City of Rockaway Beach urges you to pass HB 2744 and HB 2768 to help create a brighter economic future for the community. Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Terri Michel  
City Recorder