

# TRAVEL PORTLAND

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June 22, 2020

To: Joint Interim Committee on the First Special Session of 2020  
From: Jeff Miller, President and CEO, Travel Portland  
Re: Protecting the Statewide Lodging Tax for Tourism Promotion at 1.8 Percent

Dear Speaker Kotek, President Courtney, Vice-Chair Drazan, Vice-Chair Girod, and members of the Joint Interim Committee:

On behalf of Travel Portland, the Destination Marketing and Management Organization (DMMO) for the City of Portland, I am writing to respectfully request your protection of the statewide lodging tax for tourism promotion at 1.8 percent as a legislative priority for the June 2020 Special Session specifically.

Now more than ever, Oregon needs every industry dollar available for tourism promotion as an integral part of our overall economic recovery.

As you may know, 30% of the TLT funds are dollars that are leveraged to bolster the Regional Cooperative Tourism Program (RCTP) and Competitive Grants Programs led by Travel Oregon. These programs support local communities throughout the state and will be critical to efforts to sustain and revive the hospitality and tourism sectors and ensure a quicker return of the revenues, jobs and consumer spending that these sectors generate for our communities.

Within the Portland Region, a geography defined by Travel Oregon through RCTP, our leading destination marketing organizations have leveraged state TLT to support non-stop international air service to PDX, convention sales through the inter-governmental Visitor Development Fund (VDF) and significant local development projects, including preservation of the Willamette Falls Locks and Salmonberry Trail trailhead improvements.

Without the current state TLT rate of 1.8 percent, programs that support local destinations will be diminished at the very moment they are needed the most. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have as you consider priorities during this critical special legislative session.

Sincerely,



Jeff Miller  
President and CEO