



**MELISSA CRIBBINS  
CHAIR, COOS COUNTY BOARD OF  
COMMISSIONERS**

250 N. Baxter Street, Coquille, Oregon 97423  
541-396-7539  
mcribbins@co.coos.or.us

February 2, 2020

**TO:** The Honorable Nancy Nathanson, Chair  
House Committee on Revenue

**FROM:** Melissa Cribbins  
Coos County Commissioner

**RE:** **House Bill 4047, Testimony in Support**

I currently serve as a Coos County Commission Board Chair and as a board member of Travel Southern Oregon Coast (TSOC), a destination management organization. I have represented rural Oregon on numerous commissions and committees including Land Conservation and Development Commission, Energy Trust of Oregon, and the Association of Oregon Counties.

Tourism is a significant economic driver in Oregon, especially for communities along the Oregon coast. In 2018, this industry provided 23,460 jobs along the Oregon coast, providing employment opportunities for local residents.

While the cities in our county have a local lodging tax that supports our general fund and other tourism-related infrastructure, such as the rehabilitation of the historic Egyptian Theater, our community relies upon partnerships with our Regional Destination Management Organization and Travel Oregon for additional support and investment in developing a healthy diversified tourism economy.

Coos County has benefited significantly since the legislation in 2016 increased the state lodging tax. We have been able to invest in projects that we know, from research, will provide a long-term return on our investment, such as mountain biking trails, which attract both overnight and day visitors.

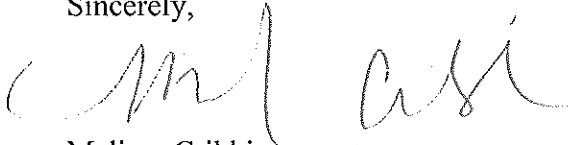
In 2018, Coos County received a \$100,000 competitive grant from Travel Oregon to invest in the phase II development of our local mountain bike system, Whiskey Run. These dollars were leveraged against nearly \$1 million in partnership funds.

The result is not only a valuable asset for our community, but also an investment that provides increased economic activity for our locally owned businesses like coffee shops, breweries, and lodging properties which are owned and managed by locals and employ community members. And this new asset isn't seasonal. Mountain biking is a shoulder-season product, attracting visitors year-round, benefiting the local economy well after the summer crowds have left.

Thank you for your leadership in stewarding this fiscal resource. I am supportive of HB 4047 as it allows the state transient lodging tax revenue to continue to be reinvested in local rural communities through Travel Oregon partnerships and initiatives.

Thank you for your time, and the opportunity to submit this testimony.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Melissa Cribbins". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being more prominent.

Melissa Cribbins  
Coos County Commissioner