

February 7, 2020

House Committee On Economic Development
Chair Representative Lively, Co-Vice Chairs Representative Fahey, Representative Wilson,
Members of the Committee
900 Court Street NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

RE: HB 4157

Chair Representative Lively, Co-Vice Chairs Representative Fahey, Representative Wilson,
Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Mazamas, I write today in support of HB4157. The Mazamas (<https://mazamas.org>) is a non-profit organization with a 125-year legacy of inspiring everyone to love and protect the mountains. Located in Portland, the Mazamas has a robust community of 3,500 individuals across the state who love to recreate in and protect Oregon's unique and vibrant outdoors.

The Mazamas is a founding member and the fiscal sponsor of the Oregon Outdoor Coalition. This coalition has collectively established legislative priorities in regards to Oregon's outdoor industry that are of particular importance to our respective communities and represent our long-term interests for the future of the industry in our state. These priorities include, but are not limited to, outdoor recreation access, recreation infrastructure, economic vitality, and support for responsible recreation.

HB 4157 represents a clear opportunity to grow an important component of Oregon's economy by providing funding for matching grants for outdoor recreation industry business accelerators and membership organizations. These grants will focus on assistance to emerging outdoor recreation businesses in our state under the mentorship of experienced professionals, ensuring these companies have a sound business plan and thus an ability to contribute to the long-term economic health of the state. Outdoor industry businesses often do not fit the profile for investments from venture capitalists or angel investors, and therefore do not have the same opportunities to grow in their initial stages as some of the other innovative industries in the state, such as technology start-ups. The Mazamas view the proposed \$250,000 in matching funds as a wise investment given that the Outdoor Industry Association estimates that outdoor recreation provides 172,000 jobs in Oregon and contributes \$749m in state and local taxes annually. Additionally, as outdoor industry start-ups are given the tools to succeed they will contribute to the thriving communities and rural economies in which our members live and recreate, create stable jobs within those same communities, and contribute to the overall economic engine of the state.

For these reasons, I ask that you please support HB 4157. Thank you for your time and the opportunity to submit testimony.

Sincerely,

Mitsu Iwasaki, Executive Director



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organization.
Since 1894.

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