

Submitter: Brian Mitchell

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Emergency Management, General Government, and Veterans

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3556

Dear Chair Tran, Vice-Chair Grayber, Vice-Chair Lewis, and members of the House Committee on Emergency Management, General Government, and Veterans, As an active tourism advocate in Crook County and owner of a small business, I am writing to express my strong opposition to HB 3556.

Tourism is a cornerstone of Prineville and Crook County's economy, fueling local businesses, creating jobs, and enhancing our region's quality of life. Our natural beauty, outdoor recreation, and cultural heritage make this a sought-after destination, and strategic tourism investments have been instrumental in strengthening our economy—including the success of our lodging sector.

Collaboration between our local DMO, Explore Prineville, along with Visit Central Oregon and Travel Oregon, has been critical in expanding tourism development and marketing efforts, particularly during non-peak seasons. These efforts drive year-round visitation, providing job stability, supporting small businesses, and ensuring a sustainable economy. Tourism dollars and Explore Prineville's initiatives have directly contributed to the success and growth of our lodging industry by attracting visitors through strategic marketing, destination development, and event promotion.

Explore Prineville has leveraged tourism funds to create and grow events that benefit both visitors and residents alike. These events drive business to hotels, restaurants, and shops, supporting the livelihoods of those who call Crook County home. Their work in promoting year-round recreation has also been key to filling hotel rooms during the shoulder season, ensuring a steady economic impact beyond the peak months. I have seen firsthand how TLT-funded advertising and marketing efforts generate visitor spending, directly benefiting not just my business but the entire community.

The impact of a thriving tourism industry in Crook County extends beyond dollars and cents. It builds a stronger, more vibrant, and more resilient community. Maintaining the current TLT distribution is essential to preserving this momentum. If passed, HB 3556 could ultimately undermine the very economic stability it seeks to support.

I strongly urge you to oppose HB 3556 to ensure continued investment in Oregon's tourism industry. Your support will allow our community to sustain strategic tourism initiatives, maintain job growth, and continue positioning Prineville and Crook County as a premier travel destination.

Thank you for your time and for considering this testimony. We remain committed to supporting the growth, sustainability, and livability of our community while preserving the natural beauty that makes Crook County so special.

Sincerely,
Brian Mitchell

General Manager/Owner
Wild Ride Brewing