

Submitter: Rick Osborn
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Revenue
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3962
May 8, 2025

Oppose HB 3962 with -2 Amendment

Chair Nathanson, Vice-Chairs Walters and Reschke, and members of the committee:

I am writing to voice opposition to House Bill 3962 with the -2 amendment. Oregonians have a long memory, and this bill sends a message that we can't afford to current and future industries. In 2003, we had high unemployment and we needed jobs for our people. The industry stepped up and said what almost no other businesses would do – it ASKED for the state to task its customers. That was done with the understanding that the funding would be spent in specific ways.

This effort was wildly successful ... and now the tourism industry is being punished for it. That is one message that will be delivered loud and clear to any industry considering collaborating with the state to accomplish similar goals in the future. This attempt at a unilateral change to an agreement made 22 years ago is successful, it is highly doubtful that any industry now or in the future would decide to take the risk of volunteering to tax their own customers.

Despite the stated desire to bring the industry to the table, this bill with the -2 amendment allows cities and counties to make decisions about how TLT dollars are spent WITHOUT any input from the very industry that agreed to tax its own customers. No industry will look at that track record and believe that good faith is in the cards for them, no matter how long it takes for the state to walk away from the deal that is made at any point in time.

There is no doubt that cities and counties are having financial issues, but those root causes are far more complex than the TLT. As such, this is seen as low-hanging fruit to try to solve problems that are created by a broken system; not the tourism industry.

As such, please oppose HB 3962 with the -2 amendment and let the conversations actually happen so that no one industry is targeted to help plug local systemic budget gaps.

Sincerely,

Rick Osborn

Blue Ridge Strategies