



Re: Support of HB 4134 – 1.25% for Wildlife

February 2, 2026

Chair Nathanson and Members of the House Committee on Revenue,

My name is Sally Compton, and I am the Executive Director of Think Wild, a nonprofit wildlife hospital and conservation organization based in Bend, Oregon. I am writing in strong support of HB 4134 with the -1 amendment.

Oregon's landscapes, habitats, and native wildlife are central to both our quality of life and our outdoor recreation economy, yet these resources are under growing pressure from development, wildfire, drought, invasive species, and increased recreation. At Think Wild, we see these impacts firsthand.

Each year, we provide veterinary care for nearly 1,000 injured and orphaned native animals and respond to more than 5,000 wildlife hotline calls across Central and Eastern Oregon. Every summer, demand for our services surges in direct alignment with peak tourism season. Increased traffic, recreation, and human activity in natural areas lead to more vehicle strikes, displaced young animals, and harmful human-wildlife interactions. While tourism is vital to Oregon's economy, it also places mounting strain on the wildlife and habitats that draw visitors here.

HB 4134 offers a practical solution by modestly increasing the statewide transient lodging tax by 1.25% to generate dedicated funding for wildlife and habitat recovery. Even with this increase, Oregon will remain among the lowest lodging tax states in the country. With average nightly hotel rates around \$115, this amounts to roughly \$1.44 per night.

Most importantly for organizations like Think Wild, this bill would sustainably fund a Wildlife Stewardship Program to support wildlife coexistence positions across Oregon and establish a Wildlife Rehabilitation Grant Program. These investments would directly support the on-the-ground work of wildlife rehabilitation centers and coexistence specialists responding daily to wildlife conflict and habitat pressures in our communities.



Nearly two-thirds of overnight stays are from out-of-state visitors, making this a fair and sustainable way for tourism to help support the natural resources that define Oregon and drive our \$16 billion outdoor recreation economy.

At a time when conservation funding is uncertain and needs are increasing, HB 4134 provides a reliable path to protect Oregon's wildlife and habitats for future generations.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sally Compton
Executive Director, Think Wild
Bend, Oregon