

Submitter:

Bonnie Kittleson

On Behalf Of:

Committee:

House Committee On Revenue

Measure, Appointment or Topic:

HB4134

Chair Nathanson and members of the House Committee on Revenue, my name is Bonnie Kittleson, and I live in Portland, Oregon. I am submitting this testimony in strong support of HB 4134 with the -1 amendment to increase the state lodging tax by 1.25% and help recover Oregon's most vulnerable fish, wildlife, and habitats, and prepare our communities for the impacts of Climate Change.

For 19 years, I have worked as an Oncology Nurse Practitioner at OHSU. Today, I want to speak to you about the vulnerability of our community and those who visit our state for recreation or business. The number of unhealthy air days is rising. Inhaling smoke particulates irritates your eyes, nose, and throat, causing coughing, wheezing, and shortness of breath. Fine particles in smoke can worsen asthma, COPD, and heart conditions, and prolonged exposure increases the risk of lung and cardiovascular disease. Vulnerable groups, like children, seniors, and those with lung or heart disease, are most at risk. I have seen the impact on patients.

Oregon's economy and the health of those who live here are dependent upon the health of our natural landscapes and waters. The growing number of smoke-filled days is not only bad for our health but can cripple our tourism economy. HB 4134 will enable our state to focus on mitigating these consequences of climate change.

The added bonus is a boost in climate-resilience-focused jobs. Eco Northwest, in a 2024 Report for Travel Oregon, states that for every \$1 million invested in restoration, 15-24 living-wage jobs will be created.

Lastly, a few final points, the minuscule 1.25% increase in the hotel tax will have no discernible impact on tourism. We all understand that Oregon's hotel-motel tax is among the lowest in the nation. I trust you understand that our natural resource-focused economy is one of the most robust in the nation. As a reminder, it produced \$20.6 billion in economic output in 2022 alone.

This is a vital issue for me and many of us who call Portland home, and I ask you to vote in support of this bill during the short session

Sincerely,

Bonnie Kittleson