

Submitter:

Laura Fletcher

On Behalf Of:

Committee:

House Committee On Revenue

Measure, Appointment or Topic:

HB4134

Dear Chair Nathanson and Committee members,

I strongly support of HB 4134 with the -1 amendment, which would increase the state lodging tax by 1.25%. This money will provide much-needed, dedicated funding for the recovery of Oregon's most vulnerable fish, wildlife, and habitats. Dedicated funding is essential to helping these efforts and this bill would create just that. Especially with federal funding and protections being reduced, this bill is greatly needed.

Many visitors to our state come for the nature we have. And Oregon's landscapes and wildlife are at the heart of what makes this state extraordinary. From our rivers and forests to the species that depend on them, our natural heritage shapes our identity and fuels our deep connection to the outdoors. I and all the people I know here in Oregon highly value these resources not only for what they offer us today, but for what they represent for future generations. We have a shared responsibility to ensure that Oregon's fish, wildlife, and habitats are protected and restored so they can endure.

A clear majority of Oregonians support securing long-term, dedicated funding to recover our most vulnerable species and ecosystems. HB 4134 represents a thoughtful and forward-looking solution. By investing in conservation, this bill also strengthens Oregon's outdoor recreation and tourism economy, which accounts for 2.6% of the state's GDP, supports 192,000 jobs, and generates \$16 billion in consumer spending. Protecting the natural resources that draw visitors to Oregon is a smart economic investment in our communities.

A healthy tourism economy depends on healthy fish, wildlife, and habitats. HB 4134 would help ensure Oregon can sustain both. This legislation gives Oregon the opportunity to lead by example and reaffirm our commitment to safeguarding our natural heritage.

Accept this rare opportunity to make a lasting investment in Oregon's biodiversity and natural legacy and support and pass HB 4134 with the -1 amendment this legislative session.

As representatives of our state, this is what I respectfully urge you to do.

peace,
laura fletcher