

Submitter: Melissa Brown

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 Melissa Brown. I am a fish biologist and I live in Portland, Oregon, a city with the incredible onus to help manage the greatest number of ESA-listed fish populations and their critical habitat in the United States. I am submitting this testimony in strong support of HB 4134 to increase the state lodging tax by 1.25% and help recover Oregon's most vulnerable fish, wildlife, and habitats.

Oregon is an incredibly special place, and our state's identity is closely tied to its rich natural heritage, including native fish, wildlife, and the habitats that support them. Our love for the outdoors is known throughout this country and beyond. Oregonians like me are proud of our natural heritage and want to see it thrive for future generations.

Securing long-term dedicated funding to recover our most vulnerable fish, wildlife, and habitats, is strongly supported by a majority of Oregonians. I urge you to support this landmark bill, which would dedicate long-term funding to recover Oregon's most vulnerable fish, wildlife and habitats - all of which are critical for our state's tourism economy. Oregon's robust outdoor tourism economy - 2.6% of the state's GDP - supports 192,000 jobs and brings in \$16 billion in consumer spending. Investing in these resources now will continue to generate more economic opportunities for Oregon's communities in the future.

We cannot have a thriving tourism economy without healthy and abundant fish, wildlife, and the habitats that support them. This legislation would ensure we have both. At a time when the federal government is slashing funds and dismantling policies that protect our vulnerable fish and wildlife and their habitats, Oregon has a chance to set an example and protect our natural heritage. Doing so would make Oregon a national leader, and Portland can help lead the way.

Thank you,
Melissa Brown