

Submitter:

Yulia Brockdorf

On Behalf Of:

Committee:

House Committee On Revenue

Measure, Appointment or Topic:

HB4134

Chair Nathanson and Honorable Members of the House Committee on Revenue:

I am writing in strong support of HB 4134 with the -1 amendment.

As a therapist, I have spent over a decade working with some of our most vulnerable populations, including refugees, veterans, and survivors of trauma. One thing I have observed consistently over the years is how profoundly access to Oregon's natural spaces supports healing and recovery. The trails, rivers, and wild places that define this state are not just beautiful. For many people, they are restorative in ways that clinical interventions alone cannot provide.

That connection between people and the natural world is part of what draws visitors here as well. Oregon's outdoor economy sustains 192,000 jobs and generates \$16 billion in consumer spending annually. But that economy depends entirely on healthy fish populations, thriving wildlife, and intact habitats. Without those, there is nothing to draw people here and nothing to sustain the communities that depend on tourism. HB 4134 would raise the lodging tax by 1.25% to provide stable, long-term funding for the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife to protect imperiled species and habitats. Even with this increase, Oregon's lodging tax would remain the third lowest in the country. More than 60% of those paying it would be out-of-state visitors who come here specifically because of what this bill would help protect.

At a time when federal protections for wildlife and habitat are being weakened, Oregon has the opportunity to lead. This is a practical, bipartisan solution that invests in the natural resources our economy and our quality of life depend on.

I urge you to pass HB 4134 -1 this session.

Sincerely,

Yulia Brockdorf

Hillsboro, Oregon