

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

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. My name is Amy Knudsen. I am a resident of Central Oregon, a professional working in the community, and a parent of two young elementary-aged children. I am a concerned citizen and science educator. I teach at our local community college and work with students from all different backgrounds daily. The passing of this bill is something that Oregon residents agree on. Supporting wildlife, conservation of natural resources, and connected habitats is something that needs to be put front and center in the decision-making process of how to fund different bills and programs around the state. I am grateful that this bill is a topic of conversation and is being considered, now let's make it a reality. This Bill represents Oregon's rich and historic values of wilderness, wildness, and responsible stewardship of the natural world. 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. 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. I strongly urge you to support the passing of HB 4134. Our future generations depend on it. Thank you again for your time and the opportunity to submit my testimony in support of passing HB 4134.

Sincerely,
Amy Knudsen
Bend, Oregon