

Submitter: Heidi Shafford

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Revenue

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4134

I am writing to ask the Committee to Support HR 4134. I am a long-time Oregon resident and I value my/our wild neighbors. Visitors come to Oregon to see our wild neighbors and enjoy our unique, beautiful wild spaces. So much is known about the benefits of being in nature and enjoying wildlife, especially the benefits to well-being and reduced stress. Wildlife and wildlife habitat are important for the health of our state, our state's human and wild residents, AND for the health of our rural communities' economies. A modest increase in the lodging tax, 1.25% for Wildlife, will provide sustainable, long-term funding for Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife to implement our state's Wildlife Action Plan. This funding will be an investment in our rural communities, the ecosystems and natural heritage that draw visitors to our state. The funding mechanism is practical, fair and balanced with the majority of the cost borne by out-of-state visitors. We will continue to have one of the lowest tourism-related taxes in the country, even with this increase. Imagine how many people will be excited to visit Oregon to see and support re-introduction of Sea Otters. Watching Sea Otters sparks JOY! Supporting wildlife and restoring wild habitats supports JOY and the economic and environmental future of our great state. I urge you to vote in favor of HR 4134. THANK YOU! Sincerely, Heidi L Shafford