

Submitter:

Malcolm Costello

On Behalf Of:

Committee:

House Committee On Revenue

Measure, Appointment or Topic:

HB4134

Dear Chair Nathanson and House Committee on Revenue members:

My name is Malcolm Costello. I have been an Oregon resident for the last 34 years and am submitting this testimony in strong support of HB 4134 with the -1 amendment to increase the state lodging tax by 1.25% to provide a dedicated, long-term funding source to protect and restore imperiled fish, wildlife, and habitats. Living in Bend, I particularly value the importance of sagebrush steppe restoration throughout the High Desert.

Oregonians, and those who move here, love the outdoors, and our identity is closely tied to Oregon's natural legacy and how we experience the fish, wildlife, and unspoiled landscapes we encounter in our travels. The quality of our life is measured less in what we have and more in how we experience the great outdoors, in its full majesty and beauty. And we believe this is worth working and advocating to preserve.

Oregon's State Wildlife Action Plan now identifies more than 300 species of greatest conservation need, 100 of which are found in Oregon's high desert. Without stable funding, we risk continued decline of the very landscapes and wildlife that define this place; that inspire many of us to dedicate our volunteer hours to preserving and restoring. At the very time the federal government is dismantling the policies that protect our vulnerable fish and wildlife and slashing funding sources, Oregon has an opportunity—and a responsibility—to step forward and invest in its natural legacy.

Please pass HB 4134 -1 this legislative session. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Malcolm Costello, Bend, Oregon.