

Submitter:

Karen Weissman-Reid

On Behalf Of:

Committee:

House Committee On Revenue

Measure, Appointment or Topic:

HB4134

I am adamantly opposed to the State of Oregon increasing the State Lodging Tax for the purpose of supporting fish and wildlife and their habitat in Oregon. I don't think this is an appropriate use of funds derived by taxing tourists, and the tourism tax we already have is already higher than it should be between the State (1%) and Lane county (10.25%). This is already a big enough burden on tourists and adds substantially to the fees they have to pay to lodge in Oregon. A higher lodging tax is punitive and punishes both the visitors and the innkeepers and hotels. There is no direct benefit to fish and wildlife from taxing tourists use of accommodations. The State of Oregon already derives its major benefit from tourism by what the tourists spend on lodging itself, as well as food, recreation, transportation, and purchases. We do not need to add to this burden by increasing the State Lodging Tax. If the State of Oregon needs more money to support fish and wildlife and their habitat, it should come from multiple other sources such as the gasoline tax, liquor tax, user fees for parks, boating, and fishing, and other fees directly related to the maintenance and improvement of wildlife habitat. There should be a complete assessment of other possible sources of revenue that could support fish and wildlife before there is any further consideration of raising the room tax.