

Submitter: Kamala Bremer

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Revenue

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4134

I am writing to support HB 4135, the 1.25% for Wildlife bill.

For the past 5 years, my husband and I have been volunteers for the Oregon State Parks and Bird Alliance partnership that monitors Western Snowy Plover nesting. In this time, we have seen public awareness grow substantially about the importance of setting aside protected habitats for plover nesting and raising of chicks. This is due to an intense campaign along the coast by volunteers and our Bird Alliance coordinator. When they understand the issues, Oregonians really want our native shorebirds to thrive!

Yet our efforts are hampered by lack of funding. The only paid staff is a single coordinator supported by year-to-year grants. Oregon State Parks and ODFW completely cut funding for staff who helped operate the monitoring program. Ongoing threats, like coyotes and corvids, need a management approach to be developed for plovers to succeed, while new threats, like electric bicycles, drones and powered paragliders, require staff-intensive education efforts to mitigate.

Plovers are just one example of the wildlife in Oregon that need more help to protect their habitats and their ability to forage, reproduce and overwinter successfully.

HB 4134 will directly help at-risk species and habitats. Currently, the Oregon Dept of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) does not receive any dedicated funds from the state for the recovery and conservation of such species and habitats.

HB 4134 will increase Oregon's statewide lodging tax, currently one of the lowest in the country. which will remain so even with the 1.25% increase. Our wildlife significantly contributes to Oregon's tourism and outdoor recreation, so asking tourists to help pay for this effort is more than fair.

Thank you.