

Submitter: Chelsie Fisher

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Revenue

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4134

My name is Chelsie Fisher, and I'm the General Manager at Imperial River Company in Maupin, Oregon. We operate a lodge, RV park, restaurant, and rafting business along the Lower Deschutes River. My job, first and foremost, is to support our team and help provide meaningful, responsible experiences in a very small river town of about 448 people.

I'm writing to share my opposition to HB 4134.

I care deeply about Oregon's wildlife, rivers, and natural spaces. I spend my time in them, I work alongside them, and I want to see them protected for the long term. That said, I don't believe this bill takes the right approach to getting us there.

In communities like Maupin, tourism isn't a luxury industry, it's a lifeline. Our local grocery store, fly shop, campgrounds, restaurants, and outfitters all rely on summer visitation to survive the rest of the year. When costs increase, visitors feel it immediately. Some come less often, and some stop coming altogether. When that happens, it's not large corporations that feel the impact first. It's small business owners, seasonal employees, and rural towns already operating on tight margins.

I'm also concerned about tying essential conservation funding to a revenue source that is already unstable.

Tourism fluctuates with the economy, wildfire seasons, fuel prices, and weather. Wildlife management and habitat protection require consistent, predictable funding, not something that disappears during a bad fire year or economic downturn.

Equity is another concern. Conservation benefits all Oregonians, not just visitors or a single industry. Singling out lodging as a primary funding source feels less like a balanced solution and more like an easy one. If protecting

wildlife and natural resources is truly a statewide priority, then the responsibility for funding that work should be shared more broadly and fairly.

To be clear, I support the goal of conservation. I do not support the method proposed in this bill. I would welcome continued work toward a funding solution that is more stable, more equitable, and does not place a disproportionate burden on rural communities and the people who live and work in them year-round.

For these reasons, I urge you to oppose HB 4134 as written and continue working toward a more durable and thoughtful approach to conservation funding in Oregon.

Thank you for your time and consideration,
Chelsie Fisher
Imperial River Company