

Subject: Lodging Tax

From: Inside Scoop <insidescoopgr@gmail.com>

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To: hotel@oakstreethotel.com

Date: February 4, 2026

Name: Oak Street Hotel and Gorge Rentals

Bill Number and Committee: HB 4134 – Testimony to the House Committee on Revenue

Dear Chair Nathanson, Vice-Chair Reschke, Vice-Chair Walters, and members of the House Committee on Revenue

My name is Denise McCravey and I am the Owner/Broker of Gorge Living, Inc. with three DBAs of Oak Street Hotel, Gorge Rentals Property Management and Gorge Property Real Estate. I appreciate the opportunity to convey my opposition to HB 4134.

We're a hospitality group based in Hood River, Oregon, focused on thoughtfully managed short-term rentals & boutique hotel stays.

We respectfully urge the Council to carefully consider the broader impacts of a lodging tax increase. While we support responsible investment in infrastructure and stewardship of public resources, additional taxes may place a disproportionate burden on small lodging operators, local workers, and visitors—potentially reducing demand and limiting the economic benefits tourism brings to our community. We encourage continued collaboration and exploration of alternative approaches that prioritize sustainability, fiscal responsibility, and long-term community well-being without discouraging visitation.

It is the successful collaboration between the local businesses and regional DMOs that help to generate economic activity and new jobs across Oregon, in even the most rural parts of our state. We focus much of our marketing efforts on growing *non-peak, off-season* travel because we know the importance of leveling out the seasonality of tourism to create year-round job security and stability for our workforce. That stability helps resorts support a healthy tourism economy.

At the state level, tourism has become a bedrock of Oregon's economy as a result of the Tourism Investment Proposal of 2003, which created Travel Oregon, established a dedicated funding source through the statewide transient lodging tax, and protected local funding investments in tourism, now the state's 4th largest economic sector.

During the recession of 2003, the Governor, legislature, and leaders across the state recognized that tourism was an untapped market, and that strategic and sustained investment in tourism was needed to establish Oregon as a travel destination for business and leisure.

While we understand the pressing demands to fund a myriad of statewide programs, Oregon cannot afford to tax its way to a sustainable economy; we must be committed to *growing* our way to a sustainable economy. Transient lodging tax is intended to be reinvested in communities to help grow local economies in support for Oregon's overall health and economic vitality.

The tourism industry has proven we will come to the table for initiatives that generate long term, strategic economic returns. Any increase to state Transient Lodging Tax deserves to be part of a consistent, defensible, and clear platform for the value of tourism as an economic development engine.

We oppose HR 4134 and ask for your no vote on this bill. Consumers have become increasingly price conscious, and increasing this tax would have negative impacts on Oregon as a competitive destination to visit. Many visitors in Oregon are fellow Oregonians, so this lodging tax increase will be paid by residents of the state, not just visitors, at a time when the cost of living is increasingly difficult.

This increased tax would also add additional costs to many smaller properties, some of whom are greatly struggling with the rising cost of running a business. All of these have the potential to lead to a decrease in future business, which would harm our local communities and our workforce.

At Oak Street Hotel & Gorge Rentals Property Management in 2025 alone:

- **We supported over 100 small businesses, vendors, and employed a full staff during peak season and off season.**
- **We welcomed over 2,000 visitors.**
- **We offered support to our community, attending events for networking & feedback, local fundraisers and raffles.**
- **We made a meaningful investment into the local economy through improvements to our hotel, while also using local vendors to complete the works.**

Your opposition to HB 4134 will allow your constituents and businesses to consistently plan for strategic investments and to continue important projects and partnerships vital to Oregon's economic viability.

Thank you for helping your tourism constituency remain stewards of Oregon's natural wonders. We will continue our work to support vibrant local communities to improve livability for all residents of Oregon.

Thank you for the privilege to submit this testimony for your consideration.

Denise McCravey
Owner | Broker

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