

Submitter: Tommy Hough

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Revenue

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4134

Dear Chair Nathanson and Members of the House Committee on Revenue,

Tommy Hough, resident of Beaverton, Washington County. I'm submitting this written testimony in strong support of HB 4134 with the -1 amendment to increase the state lodging tax by 1.25 percent to help recover our state's most vulnerable fish, wildlife, and habitat. As you're aware, Oregon is a special place, and our state's identity is closely tied to our rich natural heritage, including native fish, wildlife, and habitats that support them. Oregonians are proud of our natural heritage, and my family and I want to see it thrive for future generations and in the decades to come.

Long-term dedicated funding to recover our most vulnerable fish, wildlife, and habitats is strongly supported by a majority of Oregonians, and HB 4134 would also secure funding critical to our state's tourism and outdoor recreation economies, which accounts for 2.6 percent of the state's GDP, supports 192,000 Oregon jobs, and brings in \$16 billion in consumer spending. Investing in these resources will continue to generate even greater opportunities for Oregon's communities in the future.

As you're aware, we cannot have a thriving tourism economy without healthy and abundant fish, wildlife, and the habitats that support them. HB 4134 would ensure we have both. At a moment when both the executive and legislative branches of our federal government are demonstrating unprecedented, rudderless levels of hostility toward our nation's conservation heritage and defiling the very idea of best environmental practices as it slashes funds and dismantles policies that protect vulnerable fish and wildlife and their habitats, Oregon has a chance to set an example to protect our natural heritage. Doing so would make Oregon a national leader, and serve as a fine legacy for this legislature.

This is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to protect our natural legacy and rich biodiversity, which make our state so special. Please pass HB 4134 -1 this legislative session.

Thank you for your kind consideration.

Sincerely,

Tommy Hough