



Opposition to HB 4134 – Increase to State Transient Lodging Tax

Chair Nathanson, Vice-Chairs Reschke and Walters, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Jim Etzel, CEO of Sport Oregon, Oregon's statewide sports commission. We recruit and support sporting events that generate overnight stays and visitor spending across Oregon, fueling small businesses and hospitality jobs in communities of all sizes.

Sport Oregon respectfully **opposes HB 4134**, which would increase Oregon's state transient lodging tax by 1.25% and redirect the incremental revenue to specified natural resource purposes.

Why we oppose HB 4134

1) It makes Oregon less competitive for major events.

Event bidding is price-sensitive. Lodging taxes are a visible line-item cost for teams, families, and fans, and we already consistently hear concerns about travel costs in Oregon. This increase would push many markets further out of range. In Eugene, for example, the change would bring the total transient lodging tax to **14.25%**, making it harder to win and retain major events like future NCAA Outdoor Track & Field Championships. Track and Field/Running events at Hayward Field recently generated **\$56 million** in Lane County impact, with **65%** benefiting local restaurants, retail, transportation, and recreation businesses.

2) It weakens the visitor-economy reinvestment model that protects jobs.

Hospitality and leisure is a major Oregon employer (**200,000+**) and tourism is tied to roughly **\$14 billion** in annual economic activity. Lodging tax reinvestment is part of what drives those outcomes. Increasing visitor cost while shifting incremental dollars away from tourism and event development undermines the very engine the tax is meant to support.

3) It sets a precedent for future diversions that create long-term uncertainty.

Sports tourism is built on multi-year bid cycles and long-term commitments. Treating lodging tax as a flexible funding source, rather than a predictable tourism reinvestment tool, reduces Oregon's ability to plan, compete, and win events that generate statewide benefits.

For these reasons, Sport Oregon urges the Committee to **vote NO on HB 4134**.

Respectfully submitted,

Jim Etzel
CEO
Sport Oregon