

Submitter: Dr. David and Diane Bilderback

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Revenue

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4134

Chair Nathanson and members of the House Committee on Revenue,

Our names are Dr. David and Diane Bilderback and we live in Bandon, Oregon. We are submitting this testimony in strong support of HB 4134 with the -1 amendment to increase the state lodging tax by 1.25% and help recover Oregon's most vulnerable fish, wildlife, and habitats.

We are retired biologists and avid birders who have been volunteer monitors for various agencies and a conservation organization (USGS, USFW as well as Portland Bird Alliance) and have been monitoring Black Oystercatcher reproduction from 2006 to present. This work makes us realize how securing long-term dedicated funding for wildlife and habitats protection is critically important to our state!

This year will be our 20th year monitoring, and we always talk with people who are interested in our work on the beaches and headlands, answering their questions about the marine animals, rocky intertidal areas and birds. From these conversations, the reason these people visit our area is to see the amazing amount of wildlife! We hear firsthand how important it is to have healthy wildlife and fish habitats from these visitors. Securing long-term dedicated funding for wildlife and habitats protection is vital to our state for Oregonians as well as national and international visitors. Our town, Bandon, and many coastal communities depend on tourism to support many of our businesses. It is important to invest in our wildlife and habitats.

We have been very distraught with the federal government reducing or eliminating in some cases support for or dismantling policies that protect our vulnerable fish, wildlife and their habitats. It is important for Oregon to protect our natural heritage because in many cases, once it is gone, it will not return.

Please support "1.25% for Wildlife" by passing HB 4134 today.

Dr. David Bilderback and Diane Bilderback