

Submitter: Lori Bennis

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Revenue

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4134

My name is Lori, and I live in Portland, Oregon. I am submitting this testimony in strong support of HB 4134 with the -1 amendment to increase the state lodging tax by 1.25% to help recover Oregon's most vulnerable fish, wildlife, and habitats.

Living in Oregon means being connected to the outdoors in everyday, meaningful ways. Our rivers, forests, coastlines, and wildlife are not abstract ideas — they are places we walk, fish, hike, camp, and return to year after year. They are part of our routines, our memories, and the legacy we pass on to our children and grandchildren.

I support dedicated, long-term funding for wildlife and habitat protection because these resources cannot protect themselves. When habitats decline, and wildlife disappears, it is not just an environmental loss — it is a loss to our communities, our culture, and our identity as Oregonians. A majority of Oregonians understand this and support investing in conservation that lasts.

Oregon's outdoor recreation and tourism economy supports nearly 200,000 jobs and generates \$16 billion in consumer spending each year, but this economy only exists because our fish, wildlife, and natural landscapes are healthy and abundant. We cannot continue to benefit from these places without also taking responsibility for their care.

At a time when federal funding and protections for wildlife and habitats are being reduced, Oregon has an opportunity — and a responsibility — to lead. Passing HB 4134 would show that we are willing to step up, work together, and protect what makes this state so special.

Please support "1.25% for Wildlife" and pass HB 4134 to ensure that Oregon's natural heritage remains strong for generations to come.

Lori Bennis