

Dear Members of the House Committee on Revenue,

I am writing to respectfully oppose House Bill 4148.

I have managed hotels for the last 40 years in Illinois, Washington, California and Oregon and have personally experienced the negative effects of governments "playing with" the hotel tax for uses other than its intended purpose.

Oregon's transient lodging tax is built on a clear and effective principle: visitors generate the tax, and those dollars are reinvested to strengthen the visitor economy that produced them. That purpose-driven model has helped communities across Oregon attract overnight visitors, support local businesses, and sustain year-round economic activity.

HB 4148 would fundamentally weaken that model by allowing lodging tax revenues to be redirected away from tourism and economic development. While I understand the very real funding pressures facing local governments, this change creates a structural risk to one of Oregon's most reliable economic engines.

The visitor economy is a traded sector. Visitor spending brings new dollars into communities rather than circulating existing ones. In Lane County and similar destinations, lodging tax investments support locally owned businesses, restaurants and beverage producers, arts and cultural organizations, outdoor recreation providers, sporting events, nonprofits, and thousands of family-wage jobs. These investments also help fund assets that residents themselves use and value.

When reinvestment in the visitor economy becomes optional, long-term consequences follow. Destinations become less competitive, events and conferences choose other states, overnight stays decline, and the overall economic return to communities diminishes. Over time, this erosion reduces—not increases—local revenue capacity.


Recent public discussions about using lodging tax revenue for unrelated needs illustrate exactly why this funding must remain purpose-bound. This is not a criticism of public safety or other essential services. It is recognition that once lodging tax dollars are diverted from their intended use, the system that generates those dollars begins to weaken.

Predictable, dedicated funding allows communities and organizations to plan responsibly, attract visitors, and deliver sustained benefits to both residents and local governments. HB 4148 undermines that predictability.

I urge you to protect Oregon's proven visitor economy funding model and oppose HB 4148.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Michael Fear

General Manager - Tru by Hilton Eugene