

HR 4134 written testimony, Marilet A. Zablan

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- I am Marilet Zablan, a retired citizen, and resident of West Linn, Oregon.
- I am writing 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.
- Our native fish, wildlife, and diverse habitats—including the high desert and sagebrush steppe—are central to what makes Oregon special and to why people choose to live, visit, and recreate here.
- Oregonians value wildlife and want to see it thrive. Many of us are proud of Oregon's natural heritage and care deeply about protecting it for future generations. A strong majority of Oregonians support dedicated funding to recover vulnerable fish, wildlife, and habitats.
- Providing for continued stewardship and conservation of Oregon's natural resources is therefore **AS IMPORTANT** as is providing lodging/infrastructure to those who visit Oregon to see/experience our natural resources.
- “Many hands make light work.” Because no one entity has the financial ability to implement the needed stewardship of Oregon's natural resources, HB 4134 provides long-term, dedicated funding for conservation. This bill would secure sustainable funding to recover Oregon's most at-risk species and habitats, including sagebrush ecosystems, connected wildlife corridors, and resilient landscapes that support biodiversity statewide.
- Healthy wildlife and habitats are essential to Oregon's economy. Oregon's outdoor recreation and tourism economy depends on healthy lands and waters. The outdoor economy contributes 2.6% of Oregon's GDP, supports 192,000 jobs, and generates \$16 billion in consumer spending.
- Absolutely **NO ONE** visits Oregon just to admire the walls of their lodging. We cannot have a strong tourism economy without healthy ecosystems. Protecting fish, wildlife, and habitats is not separate from economic vitality—it is foundational to it. Investing in conservation now supports local communities and long-term economic resilience.
- State leadership is especially important right now. As federal funding and protections for wildlife and habitats are reduced, Oregon has an opportunity—and a responsibility—to step forward and invest in its natural legacy.
- HB 4134 would make Oregon a national leader. By passing this bill, Oregon can set an example for how states can proactively protect biodiversity, reduce wildfire risk, support wildlife stewardship, and sustain healthy ecosystems.
- Please think of HB 4134 as a small way to thank Oregon's wildlife and natural resources for making this such an awesome place, for Oregon residents and visitors alike. **Wildlife stewardship and healthy ecosystems are Oregon's “brand” that works well for business. Let's see business pay it back/forward.** I worked 4 decades as a professional in the field of wildlife conservation (go ahead, Google me), and can attest that enduring, long-term dedicated funding for wildlife conservation is one of the only ways to make a meaningful positive difference for ecosystems. We can decimate a species/place in sometime less than years, but it takes foresight and decades to restore ecosystem function.
- Lawmakers, please serve as inspiring, stewardship-minded leaders and pass HR 4134. Y/ our children, fellow residents, and visitors will be indebted to you for your foresight. Thank you.