

Date: February 4, 2026

Name: Kelsey Glasser

Bill Number and Committee: HB 4134 – Testimony to the House Committee on Revenue

Dear Chair Nathanson, Vice-Chair Reschke, Vice-Chair Walters, and Members of the House Committee on Revenue,

My name is Kelsey Glasser, and I own Arden, a small, independent restaurant located in downtown Portland's Pearl District. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in opposition to HB 4134.

Arden is a locally owned business that relies heavily on tourism and visitor traffic. We are surrounded by hotels and located within walking distance of many more. For businesses like mine, tourism directly determines sales, staffing levels, and long-term viability.

I have operated hospitality businesses in Portland for a decade—eight years at Arden and two years prior with another wine shop. Over that time, I have seen without exception that when tourism is strong, our business is strong, and when tourism declines, our business suffers. The correlation is clear and consistent.

In 2025, our sales were lower than 2024 due primarily to reduced visitor traffic. Our summer months (historically our most tourism-driven period) were significantly softer than normal. As a result, we were forced to reduce labor and lay off employees. These were real jobs lost because tourism levels were not where they needed to be, a reality many downtown hospitality businesses are facing.

Tourism remains one of the primary drivers bringing people into the downtown corridor. When visitor numbers decline, the impact extends beyond lodging to restaurants, retail, cultural institutions, and the workers who depend on steady foot traffic. At a time when the economy is fragile and small businesses are already struggling, policies should be focused on strengthening tourism—not introducing additional risk.

The transient lodging tax was created with a clear purpose: to reinvest in tourism to grow local economies and support jobs. Passing HB 4134 would set a concerning precedent by redirecting those funds away from tourism and toward unrelated purposes. Even when causes are worthwhile, using a tourism-specific tax for non-tourism spending undermines transparency and public trust, creating confusion for the people paying it.

For these reasons, I respectfully oppose HB 4134 and urge you to vote no. Small hospitality businesses are the backbone of Oregon's economy, yet many of us are already operating in a state of vulnerability. This bill moves in the wrong direction for an industry that needs stability and support.

Thank you for your time, your consideration, and your service to our state.

Sincerely,

Kelsey Glasser

Owner, Arden

Portland, Oregon