

Submitter: Karon Johnson

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Revenue

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4134

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

I support HB 4134, which would increase the transient lodging tax (TLT) to give wildlife conservation an additional 1% of the revenue. Presently, the TLT must be devoted entirely to support of existing tourism assets. But an analysis of available data demonstrates that wildlife conservation is an important economic benefit to Oregon tourism, and that spending additional funds to conserve wildlife will result in increased tourism revenue.

Oregon TLT is the third lowest in the country, on par with South Dakota and only greater than Mississippi and Utah. The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife has said that hunting, sport fishing, and wildlife viewing brought Oregon \$1.47 billion in 2024 dollars. In 2019, for Deschutes County, those activities generated almost \$49 million from tourist spending, 620 jobs, and over \$24 million in wages.

My family has a cabin north of Pacific City. A few years ago we had friends from Spain stay there for a few days. They went to Cape Lookout State Park and saw a herd of elk--they were astonished to be able to see wildlife so close, and so impressed that our state was so supporting wildlife.

Sincerely,
Karon Johnson