

TRAVEL PORTLAND

100 S.W. MAIN ST., STE. 1100 | PORTLAND, OR 97204 | 503-275-9750 | TRAVELPORTLAND.COM

February 6th, 2026

House Committee on Revenue
Oregon State Capitol, 900 Court Street NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

Re: HB 4134

Dear Chair Nathanson, Vice-Chairs Reschke and Walters and Honored Members of the Committee,

As the President and CEO of Travel Portland, I am writing to express my strong opposition to HB 4134. Travel Portland is the Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) for the City of Portland. Our mission is to generate travel demand that drives economic impact for Portland. We promote Portland as a destination for leisure travel, as an exceptional location to host conventions, conferences and other large groups, and as a compelling offering in travel trade itineraries for major tour operators from around the world.

Tourism is considered a traded-sector industry because it attracts dollars into Oregon from other states and countries. Tourism-related businesses generate millions in local and state tax revenue every year through property taxes, business taxes, and, most importantly, transient lodging taxes (TLT). Tourism sustains thousands of jobs and supports local businesses, from restaurants to outdoor recreation outfitters, cultural and arts institutions, craft beverage makers and tour and transportation companies, to name a few.

In 2024, visitors to the Portland Region generated \$5.5 billion in direct travel spending, fueling our economy and easing the tax burden for local and state residents to the tune of \$285 million in tax revenues, \$143 million of which was local tax revenue.

Last year, I shared with you how increasing the statewide lodging tax rate puts Portland at a competitive disadvantage when it comes to booking large, multi-day conferences at the Oregon Convention Center. This continues to be true. The most recent report from the U.S. Travel Association shows that the proposed increase would give Portland the second highest lodging tax rate on the West Coast. Portland would be second only to Seattle and our rate would be above the rates in San Francisco, Sacramento, Salt Lake City, L.A. and Denver, among many other U.S. cities.

Today, I also want to make sure you understand that Multnomah County is one of the few counties in the U.S. where the tourism and hospitality industry has failed to recover to pre-pandemic levels by most measures, including visitor volume, employment and tax revenues. This is not for lack of productivity by our teams. Travel Portland had our highest convention sales booking year ever in FY25 and we hosted our largest convention ever in 2025.

Nonetheless, headwinds caused by dropping international travel and the economy have again slowed what was a growing recovery effort coming out of 2024. According to Dean Runyan Associates, visitor volume in Multnomah County in 2024 remained below 2019 levels by nearly 18%.

Oregon Employment Department data show that in July 2025, Multnomah County employment in the Leisure and Hospitality sector was down 14% compared to pre-pandemic levels. This made Multnomah County the second from the bottom in terms of job recovery in Leisure and Hospitality second only to San Francisco County with a deficit of 21%.

Finally, the City of Portland reports that just under \$24M in lodging tax revenue was generated for its general fund in Fiscal Year 2024-25. This is down 39% from the pre-pandemic high of \$39.2M. This is revenue only the tourism industry can generate for the city's budget. A significant component of our regional economy has not recovered and raising the state lodging tax to generate revenues for purposes that do not support economic development is the wrong path.

According to the U.S. Travel Association, more than half of the U.S. destinations that increased lodging rates last year specifically dedicated those increases back to tourism marketing and other related expenditures. While the competition is doubling down, by supporting this bill, our legislature would create yet another competitive disadvantage for Oregon communities and their ability to attract visitor dollars.

With property, business and income taxes on the decline, outside visitor spending is more important than ever for keeping businesses open and Oregonians at work. Portland and Oregon cannot afford further setbacks to our visitor economy.

Thank you for opposing House Bill 4134.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'MC', is positioned above the typed name and title.

Megan Conway
President & CEO