

Submitter: Alice Weston

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Revenue

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4134

Chair Nathanson and members of the House Committee on Revenue,

My name is Alice, and I live in Bend, Oregon. I am submitting this testimony 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.

I originally moved to Oregon because I love exploring the natural environment. As someone who grew up in a place with limited access to public lands and protected environmental places, I feel incredibly lucky to now call Oregon home. With that privilege, I believe there comes a responsibility to protect our wildlife and public lands for future generations. As we have seen summer wildfires and minimal snow this winter, Central Oregonians are increasingly concerned about how we can protect our wildlife and wild places through policy and action. A small lodging tax works perfectly for our community, which sees heavy tourism from visitors looking to take advantage of our incredible wildlife and outdoor recreation opportunities. You can see local advocacy and understanding of this economic dynamic reflected in the local businesses that support this effort. Investing in these resources now will continue to generate more economic opportunities for our communities in the future.

As public lands protections and other environmental laws are increasingly under threat, securing long-term dedicated funding to protect our most vulnerable fish, wildlife, and habitats is urgently needed. Wildlife funding is strongly supported by a majority of Oregonians across the aisle. This is a bill that all Oregonians can get behind and I hope you can all be a part of its legacy. I urge you to support this landmark bill.

I hope to see you all in Salem as I advocate for this bill. I am so excited for this once-in-a-generation opportunity to protect our natural legacy and rich biodiversity!

Please pass HB 4134 -1 this legislative session!