

Submitter: Gordon Jones
On Behalf Of: Lake Creek Lodge
Committee: House Committee On Revenue
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4148

We strongly object to raising the TLT (transient Lodging tax) for the following reasons: There is a long history of the TLT tax being changed, modified, increased and abused. Currently, we collect the tax and submit it to the State. The State keeps their share and distributes the rest, not to us, but to the County. The County, then through their convoluted rules and determinations that favor keeping as much of the tax for their general use as possible, is obligated to disperse a percentage back to an "Association" of merchants or marketing entity comprised of the businesses that have collected to tax to market tourism and in theory increase our businesses. In our case, here in Camp Sherman, as an example, we had a poorly organized and poorly managed association that did not regularly request or require that the County remit our fair percentage, which should have been 70%. We have never received more than +/- 25%, and we received nothing last year. We are now asking for the past two years' share to be distributed to our association, and it may be that the only way we will ever revive it is by litigation with the County. Why not institute a real estate transfer tax, collected by the title company upon a property transfer (like Washington has) that will be collected and dedicated to wildlife or other purposes. This tax is a fraud, as very little of it is used as it was originally intended, for marketing tourism and helping the hospitality industry. I am very much in favor of helping wildlife thrive in Oregon, but putting that burden on the hospitality industry is simply picking the low-hanging fruit and not really finding a stable solution.