



RE: Opposition to HB 4148

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

My name is Sylecia Johnston, and I submit this testimony on behalf of Destination Oregon City, Inc. in strong opposition to House Bill 4148.

As a destination management organization, our role extends far beyond marketing. We are responsible for the coordinated planning of all elements that make up a successful tourism destination—including infrastructure, transportation, visitor services, and community quality of life. This comprehensive approach is exactly what sustainable destination management requires, and it is what the current transient lodging tax structure supports.

The City of Oregon City has entrusted our organization to work in close partnership with them to balance the needs of our community with the opportunities that tourism provides. This collaborative relationship allows us to address the very concerns cited by supporters of HB 4148—public safety, emergency response, infrastructure maintenance, parks and trails, and resident satisfaction—through strategic tourism planning and investment. Under the current structure, hospitality and tourism industry professionals in our community—not general fund administrators—direct how tourism revenue is invested to generate sustainable economic benefit while protecting community character.

Community-based tourism management means including residents in planning decisions. It means measuring visitor satisfaction alongside resident quality of life. It means investing in the infrastructure and services that support both visitors and locals. Cutting tourism funding by nearly half doesn't strengthen this approach—it undermines the economic engine that makes these investments possible.

When tourism promotion is reduced, visitor spending declines. When visitor spending declines, there is less revenue available for everything—tourism development and local public services alike. This is not a sustainable path forward for Oregon City or any Oregon community that has invested in tourism as an economic strategy.

We respectfully urge the committee to reject HB 4148 and preserve the proven framework that allows tourism to benefit both visitors and the communities that welcome them.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Sylecia Johnston, Contract Administrator, Destination Oregon City