

Submitter: Suzie Savoie
On Behalf Of: Klamath-Siskiyou Native Seeds
Committee: Senate Committee On Finance and Revenue
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4134

As a small business owner in Oregon that relies on healthy ecosystems for my business to survive, I wholeheartedly support HB 4134 as an investment into Oregon's natural legacy. It will conserve and restore Oregon's 300+ vulnerable species and their habitats that support Oregonians livelihoods, quality of life, and recreation needs, my livelihood included. HB 4134 will solve a long-standing funding gap for wildlife and habitats, and is widely supported by a diverse group of stakeholders with a presence in all parts of Oregon.

Federal agencies are cutting back on wildlife science and conservation, and dismantling protections for imperiled species and their habitats. States like Oregon are being told to take on a greater share of the burden, but ODFW lacks the funding needed to proactively conserve non-game species and the habitats they depend on.

My business especially needs to support in this legislation to combat invasive species. Klamath-Siskiyou Native Seeds provides wild collected native seeds to nurseries, researchers, farmers, habitat restoration practitioners, and gardeners; however, invasive species continue to spread in Oregon, threatening intact, native plant communities. Non-native wildlife also threaten native wildlife that are integral to functioning ecosystems. We need to control invasive species in order to ensure that native wildlife can thrive.

Wildlife is one of the states biggest tourism assets, and HB 4134 is a reinvestment in Oregon's tourism. Outdoor recreation is a \$8 billion industry in Oregon and makes up 2.6% of the state's GDP. HB 4143 will reinvest in our natural resources, a major draw for out-of-state tourists, which helps attract more visitors.

This is not a cost-of-living increase for Oregonians as the majority (65%) of those who pay the tax are visitors from other states and countries. And it doesn't change Oregon's low tax ranking. Oregon has the third lowest state lodging tax rate out of all 50 states and raising the rate by 1.25 percentage points would not change that ranking. Even considering local lodging tax rates, Oregon's communities are still below, or significantly below, similarly situated out-of-state communities.

1.25% for Wildlife is a monumental win for Oregon's iconic fish, wildlife, and habitat!

I wholeheartedly support HB 4134 to increase the state transient lodging tax to support Oregon's wildlife!