

Submitter: Audrey Leonard

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Finance and Revenue

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4134

Chair Broadman and members of the Senate Committee On Finance and Revenue,

My name is Audrey and I live in Portland, Oregon. I am submitting this testimony in strong support of HB 4134 to increase the state lodging tax by 1.25% and help recover Oregon's most vulnerable fish, wildlife, and habitats. I am an avid birder and love spending time in Oregon's fantastic natural areas. This bill will support these areas and the important habitat they provide. People travel from all over to enjoy Oregon's natural areas, so it makes sense to use tourism dollars to support wildlife habitat.

Securing long-term dedicated funding for wildlife and habitats protection is strongly supported by a majority of Oregonians. The funding would not only help wildlife and habitats, but also support local communities and businesses that rely on tourism dollars. Oregon's robust outdoor tourism economy supports nearly 200,000 jobs and brings in \$16 billion in consumer spending. Investing in these resources now will continue to generate more economic opportunities for Oregon's communities in the future.

We cannot have a thriving tourism economy without healthy and abundant fish, wildlife, and the habitats that support them. This legislation would ensure we have both. At a time when the federal government is slashing funds and dismantling policies that protect our vulnerable fish and wildlife and their habitats, Oregon has a chance to set an example and protect our natural heritage. Doing so would make Oregon a national leader.

Please support "1.25% for Wildlife" by passing HB 4134 today.

Audrey Leonard