

Submitter: Briana Wummel

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Finance and Revenue

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4134

My name is Bri Wummel, and I live in Bend, Oregon. I am writing in strong support of HB 4134 with the -1 amendment to increase the state lodging tax by 1.25% to help recover Oregon's most vulnerable fish, wildlife, and habitats.

Oregon's identity is rooted in its wild places. From the high desert to sagebrush ecosystems, our landscapes and wildlife are not optional amenities — they are the heart of what makes Oregon home. They are also why people choose to live here, visit here, and build their lives here.

Oregonians care deeply about wildlife and want to see it thrive. We are proud of our natural heritage and want to protect it aggressively for future generations. Strong, dedicated funding for conservation is not just popular — it is necessary. HB 4134 provides long-term, stable funding instead of leaving conservation efforts vulnerable to shifting budgets and priorities.

This bill would help protect and restore Oregon's most at-risk species and habitats, including sagebrush ecosystems, connected wildlife corridors, and resilient landscapes that support biodiversity statewide. Investing in conservation now is smarter and cheaper than trying to recover ecosystems after they have been degraded by drought, development pressure, and wildfire impacts.

Healthy ecosystems are also economic engines. Oregon's outdoor recreation and tourism economy depends on healthy lands and waters. The outdoor economy contributes 2.6% of Oregon's GDP, supports 192,000 jobs, and generates \$16 billion in consumer spending. We cannot have a thriving tourism economy without protecting the natural systems that sustain it. Conservation is economic strategy, not just environmental protection.

State leadership is critical right now. As federal funding and protections for wildlife and habitats are reduced, Oregon has an opportunity to step up and lead. Passing HB 4134 would position Oregon as a national leader in proactive biodiversity protection, wildfire risk reduction through landscape stewardship, and long-term ecosystem resilience.

On a personal level, this matters deeply to me because I live in Central Oregon because of its wild landscapes and outdoor lifestyle. My partner and I plan to raise our future children here. We want them to grow up exploring trails, rivers, forests, and high desert landscapes. We want them to know what it feels like to see wildlife in its

natural habitat, to understand the value of clean water and healthy ecosystems, and to inherit a state that has chosen to protect its natural legacy instead of letting it disappear.

I want future generations — our children and their children — to experience Oregon the way we do today. Not as a memory of what was lost, but as proof that we chose to protect what makes this state special.

For these reasons, I strongly urge support for HB 4134 with the -1 amendment. Investing in Oregon's biodiversity is investing in our future, our economy, and the quality of life we want for the next generation of Oregonians.