

Submitter: Gail Battaglia

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Finance and Revenue

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4134

Hello, I'm writing in support of HB 4134 which will provide protections for Oregon's wildlife and their habitat. This legislation has garnered broad support from conservation, hunting, fishing, ranching, and farming groups, as well as businesses across the state.

I am a resident of So. Oregon and believe that this legislation will protect wildlife and their habitat but also believe the health of people and our environment are inextricably linked. Keeping nature healthy keeps people healthy. Projects funded by this legislation will help protect and clean drinking water, support wild pollinators that are essential to our food and natural systems, and maintain species like bats that help control insect populations. These investments aren't just an investment in our environment; they're an investment in community health.

HB 4134 protects our fish, wildlife, and way of life. Oregon's Department of Fish and Wildlife lacks stable funding, especially for non-game species. HB4134 changes that, addressing an issue that is plaguing state wildlife agencies across the country. This bill, supported by a diverse and bipartisan coalition, presents a historic policy opportunity.

Oregon has a list of over 300 vulnerable species that require intervention. HB 4134 invests in conserving and restoring the habitat these species rely upon, while also supporting Oregonians' livelihoods, outdoor recreation, and quality of life. Communities in Oregon, especially our rural communities, rely on thriving, healthy environments that support our native wildlife.

HB 4134 strengthens our tourism and outdoor economy, without raising costs for residents. Because HB 4134 is funded by an increase in the transient lodging tax, a majority of the funding will not come from Oregon residents. Outdoor recreation is a \$16 billion industry in Oregon. We can keep that industry growing and thriving by investing in the wildlife and natural spaces that attract visitors, all while still keeping Oregon's statewide lodging tax one of the lowest in the nation.

Please support and vote YES on HB 4134 for the future of Oregon's wildlife and humans.

Sincerely,
Gail Battaglia
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