

Submitter: Gloria Thomas

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Finance and Revenue

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4134

As a small hospitality business owner this increase would affect my business directly. We rely heavily on occupancy and by increasing the State Transient Lodging Tax, that some argue is minimal, it will place us at a competitive disadvantage. And while it will not affect us from a monetary perspective from a state perspective as this tax flows back to the State, it will impact us by lowering the amount of tourists and Oregonians that travel to Medford therefore reducing our revenue to cover our expenses.

If you really think that 1.25% does not make a difference it does and it will. For tourists it will be based on total amount paid for their vacation or visit. For Oregonians they will opt to either not travel unless necessary and if they do have to travel will pick to either stay with family or just drive through and not stay for one or two nights. Or google a town that will cost them less on their travels. For us personally, since we are close to I-5, most of our customers are driving through Medford and stay one night as a halfway stop on their way from point A to point B. With this increase they will look at towns with lower transient taxes to decrease their one night stay cost.

Medford and Southern Oregon caters mostly to middle to middle upper class which is the class suffering the most from increases in gas, groceries, etc. that makes that trip more expensive. Medford's lodging is one of the lowest ADR's in the state which makes it a great town to stop in for the night. We will get more customers driving straight through and opting not to stop due to the increase in cost of their trip.

I also oppose the increase of Transient Tax that then will go to other agencies that while most say are directly impacted by tourism, are not the main source of their business. The State needs to find other sources in their budgets to fund those other agencies. Why would tourism pay farmers for cattle that is killed by wolves? How is that tourism's responsibility? Why doesn't the State find other ways of generating funds to repay back the Farmers? I can assure you that cattle is not the main reason we get tourists!

Please reconsider and vote NO for this increase. It will negatively impact the state with less tourists and Oregonians travelling to the state or within the State.

Thank you,
Gloria Thomas de Haas
Lady Geneva Bed and Breakfast