

Chair Nathanson and members of the House Committee on Revenue,

My name is Naomi, and I live, work, and recreate in Bend. 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 imperiled fish, wildlife, and habitats.

Oregon's wildlife populations are in decline, but the state has a plan to conserve 300 of the state's most imperiled species. While the solution is here, there has not been a reliable, long-term funding source for this essential work. HB 4134 is that funding solution.

There is a natural nexus between tourism and wildlife- tourists visit Oregon to experience our rich biodiversity and the unique landscapes that support it. When tourists visit cities, they pay for their experiences- shopping, eating at restaurants, visiting museums. However, wildlife and nature-based tourism is often enjoyed by tourists for free. Personally, when I travel, wildlife is what I want to see and experience the most, and I am more than happy to contribute financially to conservation as a tourist. When locations that thrive on nature-based tourism experience wildlife extinction and ecological decline, tourism declines along with it.

Our wildlife are in crisis. As these vulnerable species move further towards the possibility of extinction, it will be more costly and difficult to save them. **That is why we must act now.**
Please vote to pass HB 4134.

Thank you!