

Submitter: Cierra de Gruyter
On Behalf Of: Next Level Burger and Veggie Grill
Committee: Senate Committee On Finance and Revenue
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4134

Senate Committee On Finance and Revenue
900 Court St. NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

Dear Chair Broadman, Vice-Chair McLane and Members of the Committee,

My name is Cierra de Gruyter. I am the Chief Visionary Officer and co-founder of Next Level Burger and a resident of Bend. I am writing today in support of “1.25% for Wildlife” (HB 4134), a bill that would establish dedicated, sustained funding for the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife to recover Oregon’s imperiled species and habitats.

My husband Matt and I founded Next Level Burger, America’s first 100% plant-based burger restaurant, in 2014, as we wanted to have a healthy, sustainable, and delicious eatery we could enjoy with our family. Since then, we have grown from our original Bend location to add more restaurants across Oregon and also in Washington, California, New York, Colorado, and Texas. One of the reasons we chose to start our business in Bend was its fantastic environment. We are so fortunate to have access to the Cascade Mountains, the Deschutes River, and the high desert. However, we have become increasingly concerned about Oregon’s wildlife and its long-term sustainability, especially as federal funding cuts begin to impact the state.

I think “1.25% for Wildlife” is a great solution to help our environment, but also to support Oregon’s wildlife connectivity program and wildlife rehabilitation facilities. And as the environment improves, I’m sure more tourists will want to visit Oregon, which will benefit our and everyone else’s businesses.

In the upcoming Senate Review Committee hearing, I urge you to support “1.25% for Wildlife” (HB 4134).

Sincerely,

Cierra de Gruyter
Chief Visionary Officer and Co-Founder,
Next Level Burger, Next Level Veggie Grill