

February 26th, 2026

Chair Broadman, Vice-Chair McLane and Members of the Senate Finance Committee,

I'm submitting testimony today urging you to give your full support to HB 4134, 1.25% for Wildlife. **This bill 1.25% for Wildlife has broad support from all walks of life and has strong economic and business benefits for all of Oregon.**

I recognize as Chair and Members of the Senate Finance Committee that you are all tasked with addressing and resolving Oregon's finance & revenue issues. Thank you for your diligent service on this issue. **PLEASE NOTE THAT HB4134 will TAKE PRESSURE OFF** General Funds by folding in quite a few programs that get General Funds support and also addresses agency "asks" that are never met by General Funds.

Overall, this bill funds ODFW's State Wildlife Action Plan, a long-term conservation strategy for all of Oregon that has previously not had any dedicated funding. Oregon's wildlife and fisheries resources are valued & enjoyed by all Oregonians and is one of the reasons that people come to Oregon to visit, recreate and spend dollars here.

HB4134 is supported by a broad coalition of over 80 conservation, sportsmen, agricultural groups and by more than 40 businesses, both urban and rural.

HB4134 will also dedicate funding to:

- Oregon Conservation Corps, a new effort to develop a workforce working with homeowners to achieve defensible space and home hardening to **reduce wildfire threats and reduce the risk of wildfire smoke to our communities**
- Invasive Species/Weed control – reducing risks wildlife, fisheries & wildfire, livestock
- Anti-poaching, a persistent problem for Oregon's wildlife
- **Wolf Compensation – key strategy to support Oregon's wolf strategies and compensate Ranchers in throughout eastern Oregon for their role living with wolves.**
- Oregon Conservation & Recreation Fund, which funds the intersection of wildlife, recreation and community projects throughout urban and rural Oregon.

The funding for HB4134 will be generated by a 1.25% increase in the Transient Lodging Tax (TLT). An economic analysis in adjacent states has shown that *a nominal increase in the TLT DOES NOT* diminish tourism/visitation rates. At the end of the day, the costs to tourists and convention attendees to Oregon is less than in our neighboring states that have both a higher TLT and a sales tax. And overall, **an estimated 63% of the people paying this TLT are non-Oregonians.**

The business/economic argument being put forth by the opposition to HB4134 is mostly a red herring, as a 1.25% increase is equivalent to a cup of coffee each morning; unfortunately the opposition, mostly ORLA, present this as an affordability issue, which is scary but not true. Overall, *Oregon is one of the least expensive states to visit.* This is a Win-Win for Oregon!

This is a once in a generation opportunity to pass 1.25% for Wildlife with bipartisan support. I ask and urge you to support HB4134 and help get this passed in the 2026 short session.

Please vote to make this happen.

Mark Stern
marksranes@gmail.com