

Submitter: Kermit Cuff

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Finance and Revenue

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4134

I'm a frequent visitor to Oregon, and I'm writing in strong support of HB 4134 with the -1 amendment to increase the state lodging tax by 1.25% and help recover Oregon's most vulnerable fish, wildlife, and habitats. These are the main reasons I come to Oregon so often. I value wildlife and want to see it thrive. Healthy wildlife and habitats are essential to Oregon's economy. Oregon's outdoor recreation and tourism economy depends on healthy lands and waters.

The outdoor economy contributes 2.6% of Oregon's GDP, supports 192,000 jobs, and generates \$16 billion in consumer spending. We can't have a strong tourism economy without healthy ecosystems. Protecting fish, wildlife, and habitats is not separate from economic vitality—it is foundational to it. Investing in conservation now supports local communities and long-term economic resilience.

State leadership is especially important right now. As federal funding and protections for wildlife and habitats are reduced, Oregon has an opportunity—and a responsibility—to step forward and invest in its natural legacy. HB 4134 would make Oregon a national leader. By passing this bill, Oregon can set an example for how states can proactively protect biodiversity, reduce wildfire risk, support wildlife stewardship, and sustain healthy ecosystems.

Your personal story. Include your personal connection to conservation and why investing in Oregon's biodiversity is important to you.