

Submitter: Michael Stadnisky

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Finance and Revenue

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4134

I write in strong support of House Bill 4134, the 1.25% for Wildlife Act. Oregon's fish and wildlife are the backbone of what makes this state worth visiting, worth hunting, worth living in — yet the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife has operated for decades without a dedicated, sustainable funding source for the conservation of non-game species and critical habitat. HB 4134 corrects that long-standing failure by modestly increasing the state's transient lodging tax — already the lowest in the nation — and directing those dollars directly to ODFW's State Wildlife Action Plan, which identifies at-risk species and outlines concrete strategies for recovery. This is not new spending on bureaucracy; it is targeted investment in the habitats and wildlife populations that are quietly declining across Oregon, from sage-steppe communities in the high desert to riparian corridors in the Coast Range.

What makes this bill particularly compelling is the breadth of support behind it. Hunters, ranchers, conservationists, and fishing organizations have united behind HB 4134 because they understand something legislators should too: healthy habitat is the foundation of everything else. When habitat fractures and non-game species decline, the entire ecosystem weakens — and with it, the hunting, fishing, agriculture, and outdoor tourism that sustain rural Oregon economies. Passage of this bill would fund wildlife connectivity projects, invasive species control, and wildfire risk reduction, addressing threats that no single constituency can solve alone. Oregon's wildlife cannot wait for another session. I respectfully urge a yes vote on HB 4134.