

Submitter: Michael Babbitt

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Finance and Revenue

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4134

Dear Chair Broadman and Senate Finance and Revenue Committee members:

Please accept this encouragement, offered on behalf of myself, Michael Babbitt, and the Salem Audubon Society, for which I am currently serving as president. As a Salem area resident and life-long nature enthusiast I see a need for sustainable and predictable funding for wildlife conservation. Particularly nongame wildlife. Our fellow citizens and guests who hunt and fish in Oregon make an admirable contribution to conservation of wildlife, but unfortunately fewer young people are taking up hunting. This leads to a decline in license revenue for wildlife management, but more importantly, fewer young people are being taken out hunting and getting immersed into nature. We know that experiences in nature improve mental and spiritual health. A good way to mitigate this trend would be to have healthier and more diverse natural areas closer to where people live or recreate. This is something that HB 4134 would help to provide. I know that when I stay in a hotel in eastern or southern Oregon I would be happy to pay a slightly increased tax to help wildlife and habitats in areas such as where I am visiting. If such places do not have diverse and interesting natural areas, I and many others would be unlikely to go there in the first place. Hunters, fishers, tourism business folks and others see the need for this revenue, and are supporting HB 4134.

Please vote to support HB 4134, and help Oregon wildlife keep on living.

Thank you,

Michael Babbitt

President, Salem Audubon Society