

Chair Broadman, Vice Chair McClane, and members of the committee,

For the record my name is Suze Wehr, and I'm an Oregon resident writing in support of HB 4134. While studying wildlife management, I researched the budgets of every wildlife agency nationwide. Inherent problems with the North American Model of Conservation soon became clear. This structure relies on the sale of hunting and fishing licenses and equipment to form an agency's budget, with few other means to generate funds. It was made for a different age, a time before today's biodiversity crisis, rapid climate change, and extreme levels of habitat destruction.

In this model, agencies like ODFW may have great action plans for supporting conservation but only receive scattered, insufficient pockets of funding to fuel it. To protect the vitality of Oregon's ecosystems, communities, and biodiversity, this has to change now — and it can.

States proactively investing in imperiled wildlife and habitats benefit from a sufficient, longterm solution to generating income specifically for conservation, like Missouri's sales tax or Virginia's sale of outdoor goods tax. These states trusted residents to accept the change for the sake of important progress. So, we are not alone in this problem, and a real solution won't happen by accident. If Oregon is to remain a green leader and support its ecological wealth for years to come, we must do the same by passing HB 4134.