

Submitter: Allen Pike

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Finance and Revenue

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4134

I'm a hotel manager in rural Oregon. I manage two hotels and employ about 50 people between the two hotels. I have no doubt that if this bill passes, I'll need to reduce the number of people we employ. The vote on this bill, to me, is that simple. If you vote in favor, you are voting to reduce jobs in the hospitality industry.

We rely on groups visiting Oregon to support our businesses. These take the forms of tour groups, sports groups, etc. When these groups contact us for rooms, they generally provide a budget. That budget is not for the rates they are willing to pay before taxes, as if taxes are a non-issue. The budget they present is including taxes, which means I need to charge less than I would otherwise be able to in order to get the business. That means less profit, which I have to make for in reducing hours for associates. This is a tax on business, plain and simple. We have already absorbed the expense of sick leave and predictive scheduling, we can only absorb so much.

Corporate business isn't any different than groups, as accounts have budgets they need to stick to for their travelers. That is another area where there is this squeeze put on hotel profitability.

These things hurt, especially during the winter months. This impact would be made even worse by another bill coming through the legislature, that would reduce the amount of money available to promote traveling to Oregon. I don't know when Oregon became adverse to tourism... but it feels like that is where we are now.

Some may think we can just pass the expense on to the consumer, but we are competing with other states for tourism travel. If it's more expensive to visit Oregon, they can easily choose somewhere else. It won't be as lovely, but the economy is such that people are looking at their expenses and making decisions based on their wallets.

Please, vote in favor of supporting jobs in the tourism industry... vote against this bill.