

Submitter: Rosa Silver

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Finance and Revenue

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4134

I humbly ask that you support HB 4134. I draw your attention to protecting our environment, community health, financial stability and future as a travel destination.

Years ago my friend from Holland visited and toured the entire state. To my surprise his main comment was "It's so green!" and not only is he from a country known for its green pastures, he has extensively traveled via motorcycle throughout most of Europe, Asia, and Scandinavia. Our state's clean environment is an incredible asset!

This bill saves having to dip into other funds to pay for disasters, fires, protection of species, etc.

The increase in cost to tourists is minimal. I travel frequently and am used to paying additional taxes on my hotel bills. For instance, during a recent trip to Hawaii the taxes were close to 17%. Note how low Oregon's additional tax on hotels currently is.

HB 4134 protects raising costs for residents. Because HB 4134 is funded by an increase in the transient lodging tax, a majority of the funding will not come from Oregon residents. Outdoor recreation is a \$16 billion industry in Oregon. We can keep that industry growing and thriving by investing in the wildlife and natural spaces that attract visitors, all while still keeping Oregon's statewide lodging tax one of the lowest in the nation.

This Bill has so many more benefits. Currently Oregon has a list of over 300 vulnerable species that require intervention. HB 4134 invests in conserving and restoring the habitat these species rely upon, while also supporting Oregonians' livelihoods, outdoor recreation, and quality of life. Communities in Oregon, especially our rural communities, rely on thriving, healthy environments that support our native wildlife.

Recovering a species once it is imperiled enough to warrant listing under the state and federal Endangered Species Act is costly and can create a lot of conflict. By investing in proactive conservation, HB 4134 can avoid costly emergency intervention and conflicts down the road. It is an effective and fiscally responsible policy that will help wildlife and communities now and in the future.

Oregon's Department of Fish and Wildlife lacks stable funding, especially for non-game species. HB4134 changes that, addressing an issue that is plaguing state

wildlife agencies across the country. This bill, supported by a diverse and bipartisan coalition, presents a historic policy opportunity.

I urge you to consider the many ways that HB4134 is so attractive to a Portland resident such as myself, and to all Oregon residents, and then stand behind this bill and support it becoming a law.

Thank you,
Rosa in SE Portland