

Submitter: Phenix Johnson

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Finance and Revenue

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4134

Members of the Committee,

I have worked in the outdoor recreation and tourism industry for over 10 years. Many of those years were in Utah, where over-promotion of tourism and underfunding of natural resources led to not only lower quality of life for residents, but lower quality of experience for tourists. Ask anyone who has been to Zion in the past year. Locals have nowhere to live, tourists have to wait in an hour-long line for a 20-minute shuttle ride, and highways are being built through endangered species habitats to accommodate traffic. Meanwhile, parks and wildlife departments are underfunded, and the species and habitats people are coming to see are being degraded. The writing is on the wall. It is not sustainable.

I moved to Oregon to live in a place where the community values our natural resources. Somewhere with a sustainable outdoor recreation economy. Our natural environments support a \$16 billion industry; it's time that industry supports the environment. Mutually beneficial relationships can survive the harshest of conditions. We are intertwined. Will people come to Oregon if there are low taxes but no whale watching? If fires have burnt all the forests? If there's no locally sourced seafood? Will they visit Bend without forests to mountain bike through? Will they take fly fishing trips to an empty river? Will hunters travel to Eastern Oregon when the deer populations are decimated? Will they visit a Willamette Valley winery that's been overrun with invasive weeds?

We need to invest a little now, or taxpayers will see the consequences in years to come. Please, support HB4134.