

Re: Testimony in Support of HB 4134

February 25, 2026

Chair Broadman, Vice Chair McLane, and Members of the Senate Committee on Finance and Revenue:

The Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership is a national nonprofit organization that works to guarantee all Americans quality places to hunt and fish. We unite hunters, anglers, conservation organizations, and industry partners around science-based wildlife management, habitat conservation, and policies that sustain public access and outdoor traditions. In Oregon, TRCP works closely with partners and stakeholders to advance collaborative conservation solutions that support fish, wildlife, working lands, and the communities that depend on them.

TRCP respectfully urges the Senate to pass HB 4134 A and deliver to Oregonians a durable, science-based funding solution for the state's fish, wildlife, and working lands. This bill has already cleared the House with strong bipartisan support reflecting years of careful negotiation among sportsmen and women, landowners, conservation organizations, businesses, and community leaders. This is our third session advancing this proposal, and the broad coalition behind it has only grown.

Oregon's State Wildlife Action Plan is the state's science-based blueprint for conserving fish, wildlife, and habitat before species decline to the point of crisis. Developed at the direction of Congress and required for participation in the federal State and Tribal Wildlife Grants Program, the plan identifies more than 300 species of greatest conservation need, along with priority habitats and the threats they face. Despite its importance, implementation of Oregon's plan has remained chronically underfunded for more than a decade. ODFW's budget currently lacks any dedicated funding for the plan's implementation.

HB 4134 A addresses this long-standing gap by modestly increasing the statewide transient lodging tax by 1.25 percentage points; from 1.5% to 2.75% and dedicating that revenue to wildlife, habitat, and natural resource priorities. This approach creates stable, predictable funding while asking visitors who benefit from Oregon's natural landscapes to help reinvest in the resources that draw them here. Roughly two-thirds of the tax is paid by out-of-state visitors, and Oregon would remain among the lowest lodging tax states in the nation even after the increase. For Oregonians, the cost amounts to roughly \$1.25 to \$2.50 on an average overnight stay.

The bill directs funding to clearly defined priorities that Oregonians across the political spectrum care about: implementation of the State Wildlife Action Plan, wildlife habitat connectivity, invasive species response, anti-poaching enforcement, wildlife stewardship and rehabilitation, wolf depredation compensation and conflict reduction tools, wildfire risk reduction through the Oregon Conservation Corps, and community-based conservation and recreation projects through the Oregon Conservation and Recreation Fund.

For hunters, anglers, and trappers, HB 4134 A represents a long overdue rebalancing of wildlife funding. Sportsmen and women remain proud to be the primary funders of wildlife conservation through licenses and excise taxes under the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation - the most successful and egalitarian system of wildlife stewardship in the world. We have supported recent fee increases. However, those dollars alone are not sufficient to meet the scale of today's conservation challenges. This bill broadens the funding base in a fair and transparent way while strengthening Oregon's ability to leverage critical federal matching dollars through Pittman-Robertson and Dingell-Johnson allocations that would otherwise go unused.

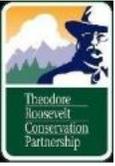
For rural Oregon, this bill delivers tangible support. Wolf depredation compensation and conflict reduction funding addresses costs that ranching families have borne for too long with uncertain state support. Wildfire mitigation, habitat connectivity, and invasive species management are investments in the working landscapes that sustain rural economies and communities. Investing in maintenance is always cheaper than investing in repair—this is as true for wildlife and habitat as it is for any other infrastructure.

HB 4134 A is both sound conservation policy and a prudent investment in the resources that underpin the most durable components of Oregon's economic engine. Outdoor recreation generates billions of dollars annually for Oregon's economy and supports communities across the state. Ninety percent of visitors to Oregon come expressly to enjoy the state's nature, outdoor spaces, and wildlife. Investing in healthy fish, wildlife, and habitat protects this economic engine while preserving Oregon's natural heritage for future generations.

The House has done its work. The coalition is broad, bipartisan, and battle-tested. The Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership respectfully urges this committee to advance HB 4134 A to the Senate floor and give the full Senate the opportunity to pass this measure into law.

Thank you for your consideration and for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Respectfully,



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