

Dear Chair Broadman, Vice-Chair McLane, and members of the Senate Committee on Finance and Revenue,

I am writing to express my strong personal support for **HB 4134, the 1.25% for Wildlife bill**.

This legislation represents one of the most thoughtful, practical investments Oregon can make in its natural legacy. Habitat loss, climate change, invasive species, and escalating wildfire impacts are already taking a toll on nearly 300 species identified by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife as at elevated risk of extinction. The need is urgent — and the cost of waiting is higher.

Opponents from segments of the tourism industry argue that this bill would “take away” from the intended purpose of the transient lodging tax. That argument is simply not accurate. **HB 4134 establishes a new 1.25% addition to the existing transient lodging tax — it does not divert or reduce current tourism funding**. It does not take a dollar away from existing marketing or direct tourism investments. Instead, it creates a responsible and transparent reinvestment mechanism that links tourism revenue to stewardship of the landscapes and wildlife that make Oregon a global destination.

That is accountability.

Outdoor recreation and tourism generate billions in economic activity. But increased visitation has real impacts — on wildlife habitat, wildfire risk, invasive species spread, and stressed ecosystems. Travel Oregon has publicly committed to advancing stewardship to address those impacts. **HB 4134 provides a direct and durable way to fulfill that commitment**. Supporting Oregon’s iconic wildlife, habitat connectivity, and wildfire resilience is not separate from tourism — it is foundational to it.

As someone who lives in Oakridge, I have been evacuated from my home four times in the last five years due to wildfire. Rural communities like mine live on the front lines of climate-driven fire risk. Investments in habitat restoration, wildlife resilience, and programs like the Oregon Conservation Corps are not abstract environmental priorities — they are community survival strategies. The Oregon Conservation Corps creates meaningful, skill-building jobs for young people while strengthening watershed health, forest resilience, and local economies. In small towns, those jobs — and the subsequent benefits to our community members — matter.

Healthy ecosystems mean clean water, safer forests, sustainable recreation economies, and long-term stability for rural Oregon.

**HB 4134 is fiscally responsible, forward-looking, and long overdue**. It ensures that those who benefit from Oregon’s extraordinary natural resources help sustain them for future generations.

I respectfully urge you to support passage of HB 4134.

Sincerely,

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