

Submitter: DJ Fletcher  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: Senate Committee On Finance and Revenue  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4134

Date: 27 February 2026

To: Members of Senate Committee on Finance & Revenue

Re: Support for 2026 HB 4134 "Increase TLT by 1.25%"

Dear Chair Sen. Broadman; Vice-Chair Sen. McLane; Sen. Anderson; Sen. Patterson; and Sen. Taylor:

I ask you to support HB 4134 to increase the transient lodging tax (TLT) from 1.5% to 2.75%. As an Oregon voter, I'm hopeful that the 2026 legislature will support the TLT increase in order to provide dedicated funds for wildlife recovery and conservation, to combat poaching and invasive species, and to provide ranchers compensation for wolf depredation.

On February 27, 2026, when the host of the "50 States" segment on GMA TV made her live broadcast in Oregon, she was wearing her hiking boots and warming up in a fireside chair in a rustic lodge. Her co-hosts were two St. Bernards, canine residents of the well-known Mt. Hood lodge. Host Beck Worley beamed as she praised "the great state" of Oregon: "It really is an amazing place, whether you're an outdoor buff or a movie fan or you love sports. . . ." Her video showed viewers beautiful images while she narrated: "Welcome to the 'Pacific Wonderland,' rightfully given the nickname for its breathtaking natural beauty -- home to deep, dark, temperate rain forests; Crater Lake, the nation's deepest lake; Mt. Hood, the third most climbed mountain in the world . . ." and more.

The big takeaway for viewers -- for hopeful tourists from across the nation and the globe -- is that Oregon is a place of "breathtaking natural beauty." Worley was obviously enthralled. She didn't happen to mention that Oregon's Transient Lodging Tax (TLT) rate is one of the nation's lowest. And I'm guessing she hadn't been told that many in our travel & tourism industry are still blind or indifferent to the precariousness of that "natural beauty."

Nothing other than the protection of our State's rich natural resources -- which offer residents and visitors world-renowned destinations for fishing, hiking, hunting, river rafting, camping, climbing, skiing, and more -- can guarantee a healthy future for our Oregon economy and communities.

A vote in favor of HB 4134 is a vote for Oregon's future!

You know that the TLT was first identified in the legislature a decade ago as a mechanism to address historic under-funding for wildlife conservation. I'm sure you also know that, in the decade since, our wildlife/biotic resource problems have grown, and the need for a funding solution is more dire. Stable funding is needed to manage resource declines and damage from both natural and human-made impacts, including natural disasters like wildfire and even wildlife tourism itself.

HB 4134 has drawn support from legislators across the aisle, as well as from ranchers, State agencies, environmental protection groups, livestock industry folks, and more. So many different types of Oregon stakeholders, rural and urban, are supporting the 2026 bill. Such support reflects the growing realization that our State's economic development and sustainability is tied to a harmonization of interests that include protection of wildlife and habitat.

I like how Director Dennee of the Oregon Cattlemen's Association explained support for HB 4134. After stressing how crucial the bill's wolf depredation compensation program is "for balancing wildlife conservation with rural economies," Dennee said, "Bottom Line: This funding strengthens the partnership between ODFW and Oregon's landowners—keeping working lands productive, reducing risks, and conserving the wildlife that makes Oregon unique."

Let's keep Oregon unique and healthy, both environmentally and economically!  
Please give your support to HB 4134.

Thank you,  
DJ Fletcher