

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

Hello,

I am Darren Ferris, from South Portland, Oregon. I am writing to encourage you to vote yes on Oregon bill HB 4134 (the amendment to increase the state lodging tax by 1.25% and to help recover Oregon's most vulnerable fish, wildlife, and habitats). In addition, I would ask you to use your leverage and power to encourage other Oregon State Senators to do the same.

Now is the time to act and we should not risk losing this opportunity to make a meaningful difference. It is rare to get a bipartisan bill, let alone one that has such a meaningful and positive impact with so little cost to those who will fund it. It is a good value, good legislation, and the right thing to do for Oregon in the present and for its future.

I was born in Oregon, raised in Alaska, and returned to Oregon for college. After living in Massachusetts and California, I returned to Oregon 15 years ago, in large part to enjoy the state's natural beauty and wildlife. As a fervent mountain climber, birder and general recreationalist, I've been lucky to be able to travel the state and witness and benefit from its natural beauty in all four quadrants. What a blessing it is. Over time, it has become obvious that much of the habitat and wildlife we enjoy is in peril and at risk. HB 4134 is an important step in mitigating some of the pressures on these invaluable treasures.

Natural beauty and wildlife are cornerstones of what Oregon is, both to our residents and those who visit our state. I believe the small increase in the state lodging tax would not be a meaningful burden, nor a perceptible cost to me and others, as we enjoy the various areas in our state and take advantage of our hotels and motels for shelter during our adventures. I regularly stay in Oregon hotels and motels, and I would gladly pay this tax in order to preserve Oregon's beauty. Furthermore, if we allow our fragile eco-systems and wildlife to decline, the reason for many of us to travel and stay in commercial lodging would be diminished and adversely impact revenue for the industry. There is a direct link between our natural resources, wildlife, and our tourism. House Bill 4134 provides a small and smart investment in preserving the value proposition we call home and others visit to explore and bask in its beauty.

Please vote yes, to ensure HB 4134 is enacted.

Thank you,

Darren Ferris