

TRAVEL PORTLAND

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February 27, 2026

Senate Committee on Finance and Revenue
Oregon State Capitol, 900 Court Street NE
Salem Oregon 97301

Re: HB 4134A

Dear Chair Broadman, Vice-Chair McLane and Honored Members of the Committee,

As the President and CEO of Travel Portland, I am writing to express my strong opposition to HB 4134A. Travel Portland is the Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) for the City of Portland. Our mission is to generate travel demand that drives economic impact for Portland. We promote Portland as a destination for leisure travel, as an exceptional location to host conventions, conferences and other large groups, and as a compelling offering in travel trade itineraries for major tour operators from around the world.

Tourism is considered a traded-sector industry because it attracts dollars into Oregon from other states and countries. Tourism-related businesses generate millions in local and state tax revenue every year through property taxes, business taxes, and, most importantly, transient lodging taxes (TLT). Tourism sustains thousands of jobs and supports local businesses, from restaurants to outdoor recreation outfitters, cultural and arts institutions, craft beverage makers and tour and transportation companies, to name a few.

In 2024, visitors to the Portland Region generated \$5.5 billion in direct travel spending, fueling our economy and easing the tax burden for local and state residents to the tune of \$285 million in tax revenues, \$143 million of which was local tax revenue.

As I shared in my testimony yesterday, the proposed statewide lodging tax increase puts Portland at a competitive disadvantage when it comes to booking large, multi-day conferences at the Oregon Convention Center. U.S. Travel Association data confirms that the proposed increase would give Portland the second highest lodging tax rate on the West Coast. Portland would be second only to Seattle and above the rates in San Francisco, Sacramento, Salt Lake City, L.A., Denver, and many other U.S. cities.

This is a perilous position to try to compete from, especially when we already know that Multnomah County is one of the few counties in the U.S. where the tourism and hospitality industry has failed to recover to pre-pandemic levels by most measures, including visitor volume, employment and tax revenues. I want to emphasize, this is not for lack of productivity by our teams. Travel Portland had its highest convention sales booking year ever in FY25 and we hosted our largest convention ever in the city last summer. But headwinds caused by dropping international travel and the regional economic factors have again slowed what was a growing recovery effort coming out of 2024 as Portland saw 100,000 fewer international travelers in 2025.

The hole that the tourism and hospitality industry in Portland finds itself in six years after the onset of the pandemic is deep:

- According to Dean Runyan Associates, 2024 **visitor volume** in Multnomah County remained **below 2019 levels by nearly 18%**.
- 2025 Oregon Employment Department data show Multnomah County **employment** in the Leisure and Hospitality sector was **down 14% compared to pre-pandemic**. This means we are the second lowest in job recovery for all U.S. counties, with only San Francisco County, seeing lower job recovery being down 21%.
- The City of Portland reports just under \$24 million dollars in lodging **tax revenues** generated for their general fund in Fiscal Year 24-25. This is a **decline of 39%** from the pre-pandemic high of \$39.2 million.

In this extraordinarily challenging environment, raising the statewide lodging tax to generate revenues for purposes that do not support economic development is the wrong path.

According to the U.S. Travel Association, more than half of U.S. destinations that increased lodging rates last year specifically dedicated those increases back to tourism marketing and other related expenditures. While the competition is doubling down, by supporting this bill, our legislature creates yet another competitive disadvantage for Oregon communities and their ability to attract visitor dollars.

With property, business and income taxes on the decline, outside visitor spending is more important than ever for keeping businesses open and Oregonians at work. Portland and Oregon cannot afford further setbacks to our visitor economy.

Thank you for opposing House Bill 4134A.

Sincerely,



Megan Conway
President & CEO