

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

Dear Senators,

My name is Tamara Stephas. I live in Bend, and grew up in La Grande, between the Blue and Wallowa mountains. I strongly urge you to support HB 4134, 1.25% for Wildlife. Please support Oregon's tourism industry, wildfire risk reduction and resilience, climate mitigation, and Oregon's priceless environment.

Our wildlife and wild lands are economic drivers in many parts of the state. Here in Bend we're known for our outdoor recreation industry, and I see firsthand how many people travel here to enjoy our environment.

In a changing climate it's also imperative that we preserve the carbon capture abilities of our forests, and invest in wildfire risk reduction and resilience. With Federal funding currently difficult to rely on, we need to figure out where these resources will come from. I think HB 4134 is a wise source of funding.

Long-term funding to recover Oregon's most vulnerable fish, wildlife and habitats is not just a good economic investment, it's important to who we are as Oregonians. Our rich and varied ecosystems are a precious legacy. We owe our children and grandchildren the opportunity to grow up with the same outdoor opportunities we had. We owe them the chance to ski beside fox and pine marten prints in the snow. We owe them old forests breathing out oxygen and swirling with bird song. We owe them salmon and trout in clean, cool streams.

Most of my family's recreational travel is right here in Oregon. A few dollars on our hotel bill is a small price to pay to preserve our natural legacy for future generations. I support this lodging tax and urge you to support it too.

Thank you for considering Oregon's long term health and sustainability. If you don't do it now, who will?