

February 28, 2026



Bill Number and Committee: HB 4148A
Testimony to the Senate Committee on Finance and Revenue

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

We are concerned that the future funding of local environmental projects will be curtailed by the current language -

(a) Fund tourism promotion, [or] tourism-related facilities or resiliency grants for small businesses in the restaurant and lodging industry;

As you may be aware, Visit Central Oregon, through their ongoing *Future Fund* program has significantly contributed to various environmental-related projects in central Oregon. Existence of the Future Fund, which supports projects for residents and visitors alike, has greatly minimized the criticism of other funding designed to attract tourists to central Oregon.

DarkSky Oregon's [mission](#) benefited greatly over two years by receiving competitive *Future Fund* grants in support of education about the environmental and societal benefits of dark skies in central Oregon. We coordinated the grant-writing and subsequent fund distribution with other like-minded groups – Sunriver Nature Center and Observatory, Prineville Reservoir State Park, Pollinator Pathway Bend, High Desert Museum, Pine Mountain Observatory, Oregon Astronomy and Rocketry and Worthy Environmental. Each of these groups benefited from the "[Got Stars Central Oregon](#)" *Future Fund* project.

The current language in HB 4148A leaves in doubt the possibility of funding for projects like VCO's *Future Fund*. The long-term benefits of funding environmental projects for residents and visitors state-wide are very clear and desirable. It would be a step in the wrong direction if programs such as *Future Fund* were not clearly supported by this Bill and your organization.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "William S. Kowalik".

William S. Kowalik, PhD
Chairperson
DarkSky Oregon