

March 19, 2019

The Honorable Mark Hass, Chairman
Senate Finance and Revenue Committee
900 Court Street, NE | Oregon State Capitol
Salem, OR

Dear Chairman Hass and Honorable Members of the Committee:

My name is Teri Myers and I thank you for the opportunity to represent the La Pine Chamber and La Pine Park and Recreation District in opposition to SB595.

I work directly with both agencies and as one of the people who works to bring tourists into our area I realize the importance of the TRT funding to our small community. We know that there are attempts to use the funding that was set up to promote tourism and redirect those monies to other uses. (Fixing roads among them!)

Travel Oregon and the seven destination Marketing organizations across the state are constantly working to bring folks into their areas during what the industry terms the shoulder season. In Central Oregon, with the help of our rural tourism studio, The Newberry Country Trail, we have been able to form – for the first time ever, an agreement between local towns and villages, to work as a single collaborating unit of regional towns, to boost the economy in each location while we host new tourists to our hometowns. It is an “incredible union” that makes us work as a unit to boost our communities and our economy with a feeling of cohesiveness and strength of purpose.

Do not change the statute. Tourism is big business for Oregon- in every corner of our state and it is ridiculous to punish the many folks who depend on the stream of funding that was set up to protect our growing industry! Please uphold the original intent of the law and DO NOT undermine the many towns that are working together to promote our love of our state while we find ways to keep our tourism jobs and visiting opportunities in top notch shape for residents and tourists to our area.

Additionally, the Travel Oregon partners are instrumental in bringing the need for affordable housing to the forefront across Oregon. Workers in the industry need to be able to live and work where they can do their best for the towns, businesses, resorts and most importantly, the folks who come to play and end up coming back to stay.

Please protect our industry, our towns and businesses involved in tourism and know that they only way we can keep doing our jobs to steward the attention of visitors to our great destinations is to continue to use the TRT funds as they were originally intended.

Thank you for your consideration,

Teri Myers,
La Pine Chamber of commerce and LPRD P O Box 616, La Pine, OR 97739