



January 29, 2020

Chairperson- Representative Nancy Nathanson
House Committee on Revenue
900 Court St., NE
Salem, OR 97301

Re: HB 4047 Support, State Transient Lodging Tax

Dear Chair Nathanson,

On behalf of Oregon's tourism industry, I am writing to ask for your support of HB 4047 which would lift the sunset on the state transient lodging tax (TLT) and maintain the current level of investment in Oregon's tourism industry.

The TLT was established in 2003 to create a dedicated funding source to promote tourism and economic development in the hospitality industry in Oregon. In 2016 the tax was adjusted to 1.8% with a sunset to 1.5% in July 2020.

As you may know, 30% of the TLT funds are dollars that are leveraged to bolster the Regional Cooperative Tourism Program (RCTP) and Competitive Grants Programs led by Travel Oregon.

These programs support local communities throughout the state: helping them develop their destination, conceiving new tourism assets, expanding the visitor industry and improving local livability for residents and those who visit.

As a leader in one of the seven Regional Destination Marketing Organizations (RDMOs), I am urging you to lift the sunset and maintain the statewide TLT at 1.8%. The success of the programs administered by Travel Oregon through revenue generated from this tax have been critical to our region's success in growing jobs and increased economic activity for our community.

In Southern Oregon the state program has supported our ability to develop a regional wildfire smoke monitoring system, four rural tourism programs in our rural communities, wine industry support, marketing for regional rodeos, customer service workshops, Canada sales missions and off-season marketing efforts to increase out of state visitation. Travel Oregon grant funding has helped enhance and promote tourism efforts including diversity and equity training and building tourism assets throughout the region.

Without the current state TLT 1.8% rate, these kinds of grant projects and regional funding will be cut and programs that leverage these state dollars will be scaled back.

These investments both supported our region as a destination for visitors inside and outside the state, providing added value to the quality of life for the residents of our community. These investments would not have been possible without the state support through the TLT. I would be happy to share more details on how our community benefits directly from the TLT and answer any questions you may have as you consider this important legislation.

Again, we urge your support of HB 4047 to keep the current statewide lodging tax rate at 1.8%, a decision that will ultimately support continued economic growth and development in every region of Oregon. Please don't hesitate to contact me if I can be of further assistance.

With Warm Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brad Niva", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Brad Niva
Executive Director
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