

Submitter: Cajun Olson

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2977

I am writing to express my strong opposition to HB 2977, which seeks to increase the state transient lodging tax from 1.5% to 2.5% to fund the Recovering Oregon's Wildlife Fund. While I support conservation efforts, I believe this bill places an unfair and premature financial burden on taxpayers, businesses, and the tourism industry.

The justification for this tax increase appears to be the anticipation of reduced federal funding. However, by raising taxes before any actual decrease in federal support or any corresponding relief for taxpayers, the state is shifting financial pressure onto businesses and individuals before addressing the root issue. It is inappropriate to demand more from taxpayers without first ensuring that existing funds are being managed effectively and that all alternative funding options have been explored.

As a business owner on the Oregon coast, I am deeply concerned about the direct impact this tax increase will have on my livelihood. Tourism is the backbone of our coastal economy, and higher lodging taxes will make Oregon a less competitive destination, potentially discouraging visitors and reducing overall spending in our communities. This legislation risks placing unnecessary strain on small businesses like mine, which depend on a thriving tourism industry to survive.

Rather than preemptively increasing taxes, I urge the legislature to seek alternative funding solutions that do not put additional pressure on Oregon's businesses and working families. Please oppose HB 2977 and consider more balanced approaches to supporting conservation without jeopardizing local economies.

Thank you for your time and consideration.