



House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water  
900 Court St. NE  
Salem, Oregon 97301

February 21, 2025

Re: HB 2977 (Increases the state transient lodging tax)

Co-Chairs Helm and Owens, Vice Chair Finger McDonald, and Members of the Committee,

This testimony is submitted by the Oregon Wildlife Coalition **in support of HB 2977**. Members of the Oregon Wildlife Coalition include Bird Alliance of Oregon, Cascadia Wildlands, Defenders of Wildlife, Humane Voters Oregon, Humane World for Animals, Oregon Wild, Think Wild, Western Environmental Law Center, and Willamette Riverkeeper.

Oregon is fortunate to be home to a diverse array of fish and wildlife species and the habitats they rely upon. However, growing threats from climate change, invasive species, habitat loss and fragmentation, and other human-made and natural-caused impacts are taking a toll on native wildlife's ability to thrive. In Oregon, there are nearly 300 species that are considered "species of greatest conservation need," meaning they face elevated risks of extinction. The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) has a blueprint for conserving these species and habitats, known as the Oregon Conservation Strategy and Nearshore Strategy (Conservation Strategies). The goals of the Conservation Strategies are to maintain healthy fish and wildlife populations by maintaining and restoring functioning habitats, preventing declines of at-risk species, and reversing declines in these resources where possible.

However, due to inconsistent and insufficient funding for these conservation programs, ODFW does not have the resources to implement many of the necessary actions recommended in the Conservation Strategies. The combination of mounting threats to our fish and wildlife with a lack of dedicated funding to address those issues underscores the urgency of passing HB 2977 – 1% for Wildlife. Further delay puts these species' future in jeopardy.

To pay for these critical conservation programs, HB 2977 would utilize a 1% increase in the state transient lodging tax to generate approximately \$30 million a year for proactive, collaborative wildlife and habitat conservation. This is a bold, yet cost-effective solution that would provide a steady, sustainable source of funds to ODFW's Conservation Strategies to help offset the increasing impacts of tourism and other natural and human-caused impacts on Oregon's most at-risk fish, wildlife, and habitats.

Oregonians have a strong interest in healthy populations of native flora and fauna and the habitats that sustain them, and HB 2977 provides the sustained funding ODFW needs to conserve and recover Oregon's most vulnerable wildlife and habitat.

We urge you to **vote YES on HB 2977**.

Sincerely,

*Bird Alliance of Oregon*  
*Cascadia Wildlands*  
*Defenders of Wildlife*  
*Humane Voters Oregon*  
*Humane World for Animals*

*Think Wild*  
*Oregon Wild*  
*Western Environmental Law Center*  
*Willamette Riverkeeper*