



February 25, 2025

House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water  
Oregon State Legislature  
900 Court Street NE  
Salem, OR 97301

**Re: Oppose House Bill 2977**

Dear Chair Helm, Chair Owens and Members of the House Committee:

As Executive Director of the Westside Economic Alliance (WEA), I am writing on behalf of our membership to express our opposition to House Bill 2977, which proposes an increase in the statewide transient lodging tax (TLT).

WEA is a non-profit, member-based organization that advocates for a healthy economic environment on the Westside of the Portland, Oregon metropolitan region. Our territory covers the whole of the Tualatin Valley, which includes all of Washington County, West Clackamas County to West Linn and Oregon City, and Multnomah County into the western portions of Portland.

This increase in the TLT would put Oregon—particularly the Portland Metro region—at a competitive disadvantage in attracting key visitor segments essential to our region’s economic recovery and long-term growth.

In Washington County, **corporate travel is vital to the growth of our high-tech corridor**. Higher travel costs will further slow travel to the region. Harming corporations, local businesses, and all jobs reliant on these visitors.

Revitalizing Portland’s central core by attracting conventions and out-of-state business is critical not only for the city, but for Oregon’s overall economy. Portland already struggles to compete with similar cities for such events. Raising the transient lodging tax would only make this challenge worse by increasing costs for meeting planners and visitors, making Oregon an overall less attractive destination.

Additionally, this tax increase would place an undue financial burden on lodging operators, many of whom are small business owners still recovering from the prolonged impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Adding costs to an industry that is still rebounding will hinder Oregon’s tourism growth and slow economic recovery.

WEA wants to emphasize that finding a reliable source of revenue for the Fish and Wildlife service is important for our state. Oregon’s natural beauty and

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abundant wildlife is a critical and often overlooked aspect of recruitment to our state and thus a crucial part of our economy. While the goal of this bill is commendable, the way in which this funding would be raised is where our opposition lies. Considering the economic hardship this increase could impose upon our region, we implore the committee to find alternate funding sources for this important work.

We urge you to oppose HB 2977 and instead consider alternative measures that support Oregon's tourism industry without compromising our competitiveness or burdening local businesses.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "elizabeth mazzara Myers". The signature is written in a cursive, lowercase style.

Elizabeth Mazzara Myers, WEA Executive Director