



March 4, 2025

House Committee on Emergency Management, General Government, and Veterans
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court St NE
Salem, OR 97301

Subject: Opposition to HB 3556 – Relating to the use of local transient tax revenue.

Dear Representative Javadi, Representative Walters, Senator Weber, and Committee,

My name is Angie Villery, President and CEO of Travel Salem. I am writing to express my strong opposition to HB 3556, which proposes extending the use of Transient Lodging Tax (TLT) revenues to fund public safety services and other costs related to “community infrastructure”. While I fully recognize public safety as being instrumental to our state’s wellbeing, the TLT has the best return on investment when it is used to attract visitors to Oregon who generate revenue for all communities and Oregon (e.g., gas tax, TLT). When we expand the use of the TLT we lose sight of its original purpose—to drive economic impact from visitors and support local tourism marketing and development programs that increase visitation.

I have been with Travel Salem for 18 years and have seen the impressive return on investment from the Transient Lodging Tax supports tourism promotion that attracts new and repeat visitors to Oregon. Over the last 20 years, visitor spending in Oregon has grown from \$6.5 billion in 2003 to \$14 billion in 2024. In the Salem region, visitor expenditure generates \$782 million annually and employs 7,500+ residents.

The tourism industry is a vital economic development driver for Oregon through leisure visitation, business travel and relocation. Already, local governments allocate most of their TLT revenues to non-tourism related purposes. Redirecting more of these funds away from their intended use would further undermine tourism promotion efforts, ultimately impacting Oregon’s economy. Therefore, I urge you to oppose HB 3556 and protect the integrity of the Transient Lodging Tax.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Angie Villery, President & CEO
Travel Salem
angie@TravelSalem.com