

Submitter: Faith Lemire Baeten

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Emergency Management, General Government, and Veterans

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3556

House Committee on Emergency Management, General Government, and Veterans
Oregon State Capitol, 900 Court Street NE Salem, Oregon 97301

Re: HB 3556 Relating to the use of local transient tax revenue;

Chair Tran, Vice Chair Grayber, Vice Chair Lewis, and Members of the Committee:

Hello,

I am writing in opposition to HB 3556. As a local business owner, I know that tourism is the lifeblood of our town, but without organized support, it cannot continue to thrive. The City of Grants Pass would jump at the opportunity to redirect funds from tourism initiatives. This bill would drastically damage Grants Pass's ability to become the tourism hub it's on the path to be.

Over the past decade, the tourism sector in Southern Oregon has demonstrated robust growth. Between 2013 and 2023, travel spending in the region increased by 35%, translating to an average annual growth rate of approximately 3.5%. Employment in the tourism industry expanded by 20% during the same period, adding nearly 2,050 jobs. Earnings for employees in this sector saw a cumulative rise of 28%, reflecting enhanced income opportunities for residents.

As a business owner, a hospitality worker, and a member of the board of Visit Grants Pass, I stand in opposition to HB 3556, and I hope you will too. Thank you for your time.

Best,
Faith