

Submitter: JOSHUA BONDE

On Behalf Of:

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

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3556

The legislature ought to be careful about letting well funded, special interest groups like ORLA decide where tax dollars are allocated. The impact and cost of hosting tourists falls on the communities they visit; therefore, these places ought to keep the majority of any tax revenue! I wonder what kind of arguments ORLA would make to the legislature if local communities took none of the tourist revenue and stopped providing public restrooms, paved streets, garbage cans, etc.

Do the right thing and let the communities that host visitors keep all, or most of the money they generate!

I believe the way ORLA has influenced how local tax revenue is dispersed is irresponsible, possibly corrupt. This new language does not go far enough towards correcting the problem; the state should not force local jurisdictions to spend money the same ways since each jurisdiction is unique. Local jurisdictions should decide how they want to contribute toward the state not the other way around! For example, If sunset highway is in disrepair, let coastal communities focus their tourist dollars toward making the highway safe for residents and visitors to drive. Or, maybe these communities want to fund their hospitals and parks, or offer grants to local businesses. Bottom line, the tourist industry benefits from a healthy, happy, clean community at large, so there is no good reason not to let most of the tax dollars stay in the region where they're generated--lodging taxes could even get reduced, since locales raise them for a percentage just to keep up with some costs! I live in Cannon Beach where property taxes AND visitor impacts are high. I want state leaders to understand that OUR property taxes benefit the visitors' experience without proportional limits; we don't say the visitors can have 30% of public resources, even if they demand way more. Also, have you ask visitors, do they want to pay lodging taxes that don't even fund their experience where they are staying? I urge legislatures to consider the places where the taxes occur and whom they affect directly before looking at this revenue as a state funding source.

And to ORLA: If communities kept more money, they could give a better experience for their customers and do it with a lower tax rate. If anyone is to blame for higher taxes, it is ORLA! Their special interest lobbying and subsequent regulation, has restricted freedoms for consumers, businesses and local governments to decide how best to make their dollars count!

Legislators, Please reject the influences of well funded special interest groups Like

ORLA, they are literally a small percentage of actual Oregon voters!