HB 3556: Oppose Changes to State TLT

March 20, 2025

Chair Tran, Vice-Chair Grayber, Vice-Chair Lewis and Members of the House Emergency Management, General Government and Veterans Committee:

The Oregon Way seems to mean something a little different to everyone these days, but at the center of that value is a focus on finding common ground and practical solutions together.

In the case of HB 3556, concerned cities and counties applied no effort in outreaching out to the tourism industry nor engage us in solving our common challenges with Transient Lodging Taxes. Based on that, the (OCVA) strongly opposes HB 3556. Cities and counties could have engaged our industry with frank and honest conversation, which would have produced willing partners.

As an example, we responded to calls for increased public and beach safety on the South Coast, by proactively investing in Curry County Aquatic Safety, which by now has intercepted 10's of thousands of visitors before tragedy occurs on our rivers and beaches. Are other city and county managers not interested in proactively expanding this program in partnership with our visitor industry? If not, why not?

As communication professionals, we are the best partners to reach and educate visitors on visiting responsibly, including public safety messaging to prevent injuries and save lives. We are a powerful partner, eager to be invited into the conversation and collaborate.

The repeated fallacy of the 70/30 TLT split obscures that fact that most cities and counties already retain well over 50% of TLT collected. We understand that cities and counties have real budgetary and other needs. The way to solve these problems starts with a dialogue; not simply drafting legislation to cut into an industry's agreed-upon tax formula. That's not the Oregon Way.

Please support our culture of The Oregon Way, by voting no on HB 3556 and encourage city and county leadership to sit down at the table and work things out.

Sincerely,

Marcus Hinz, Executive Director

Oregon Coast Visitors Association