



HUMANE VOTERS | OREGON

Testimony of Humane Voters Oregon on HB 2977 House Committee on Revenue

May 7, 2025

Chair Nathanson, Vice Chairs Reschke and Walters, and Members of the Committee:

Humane Voters Oregon is a nonprofit organization that works in Oregon's political process and elections to promote humane treatment of animals. We are not affiliated with any other state or national organization.

Humane Voters Oregon supports HB 2977.

HB 2977 would increase Oregon's tax on "transient lodging" (hotels and motels, Airbnbs, etc.) from 1.5 percent to 2.5 percent to help fund wildlife conservation in Oregon. The money would be spent for purposes identified in ORS 496.303(13), which would include (as amended by HB 2977):

To promote, implement, revise or enhance the policies in the "Oregon Conservation Strategy," 2016, and the "Oregon Nearshore Strategy," 2016, or any subsequent iterations of those policies, as determined by the department; and * * *
To satisfy the nonfederal fund matching requirements for a conservation or restoration program designed to recover and manage the species in greatest need of conservation and the habitats essential to conservation of those species, as determined by the department[.]

(Page 4, lines 31-37.)

Humane Voters Oregon supports HB 2977 because the money raised would lead to more effort to protect and recover all wildlife for the benefit of all Oregonians. Currently, wildlife conservation competes for state general funds and a portion of revenue from the sale of hunting and fishing licenses. This makes the funding unstable and leads to a focus on animals targeted by hunters and anglers. A dedicated funding source for wildlife conservation would make Oregon's conservation programs more effective and allow those programs to focus on all wildlife for all Oregonians.

Funding wildlife conservation through an increase in the transient lodging tax makes sense because a robust wildlife population is a draw for tourism, which benefits the transient lodging industry. Raising the tax by one percent would not impose an undue hardship on the transient lodging industry because the tax is currently among the lowest in the country and would remain comparatively low.

Thank you for considering our comments.

Brian Posewitz
Director