

Submitter: Valerie Lovelace  
On Behalf Of: Visit Grants Pass  
Committee: House Committee On Revenue  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3962

As a 9 year City Councilor for the City of Grants Pass, I was heavily involved in fighting for Visit Grants Pass the independent Tourism Contracting Organization, which has it's own Board of Directors. As with any business related organization it is imperative that it be made up of professionals, experts, that know how to promote and market their craft. If money is able to be siphoned off by elected officials for other "needed services" I am afraid you will lose the needed financial resources to support the great organizations established to support the second largest employer in our Southern Oregon region. After losing a timber industry I feel it would decimate our local economy. In areas like the Oregon Coast where big city people automatically gravitate to, I can understand their need, but in the rest of the state where more marketing is necessary and there is stiff competition for visitors it could decimate our local economy. I have seen the growth and vibrancy that has come as a result of our Visit Grants Pass organization funded through the Lodging tax, and we have already used the 30 percent allowed for Public Safety, any more than that would send us backwards as a professional marketing organization. Oregon's amazing natural beauty is what makes this state such a big draw for tourism. Don't handicap our opportunities by giving short term politicians a grab at this important revenue source. If indeed coastal communities are awash with extra lodging funds , make an exception for them. Don't make a blanket rule or law that makes it difficult for the rest of the state that desperately needs the marketing money.