

Submitter: Joseph Vaile
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Revenue
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2977

Testimony in Support of HB 2977

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

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of HB 2977. This bill would raise Oregon's statewide transient lodging tax by a small amount (1%) and dedicate desperately needed funding to ODFW to implement the Oregon Conservation and Nearshore Strategies.

Oregon's wildlife, natural areas, and outdoor recreation make our state special. But our environment faces growing pressures from climate change, development, pollution and other threats. Many species and ecosystems are imperiled and in need of recovery and restoration. Without funding, it will be impossible to protect these resources for future generations.

Outdoor recreation is a major part of Oregon's economy. It generates billions of dollars in consumer spending and supports thousands of jobs across the state. Oregon's wildlife and natural areas draw visitors here. It also makes economic sense to reinvest in the very places that fuel this economic activity.

Without other sources of funding, HB 2977 offers a fair way to help fund conservation without increasing costs for most Oregonians. Most lodging taxes are paid by out-of-state visitors, and even with this increase, Oregon's lodging tax would remain one of the lowest in the country. This is a modest, responsible step to protect the lands and wildlife that are critically important to Oregonians and ensure the natural places we love are here for the next generation.