

House Committee on Revenue  
Oregon State Capitol  
900 Court Street NE  
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Oppose HB 2977 – Protect Local Tourism Funding in Florence

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

As a small business owner and resident of the Florence community, I am writing to voice strong opposition to HB 2977. Me and my wife own a 5 bedroom boutique hotel in Old Town Florence. Inflation exploded in the past 4 years and is finally stabilizing and now the State of Oregon wants to add another 1% to the transient lodging tax (TLT). I hope you realize that this money comes directly out of small business owners pockets as it is becoming much more difficult to pass along added costs to our clients. We will have to reduce room rates so we can keep the total cost constant. So WE pay it, not the tourist!

Florence depends on tourism—not just for seasonal visitors, but for sustaining small businesses, creating jobs, and funding essential community assets like the Florence Events Center, which was built using transient lodging tax (TLT) funds. Increasing the state lodging tax risks driving visitors elsewhere and undermining local efforts to maintain and grow our year-round economy.

The current TLT structure already supports strategic, high-impact tourism marketing and infrastructure investments in rural areas. Raising the rate may reduce travel demand, increase lodging costs, and harm the very businesses that fund critical services in our community.

We urge you to protect rural communities like ours that rely on tourism to survive and thrive. Please oppose HB 2977 and preserve the integrity of Oregon's tourism economy.

Sincerely,

John and Sarah Raleigh  
Edwin K. Boutique Hotel  
Florence, OR