

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 long time resident of the Florence community, and a business owner here I am writing to voice strong opposition to **HB 2977**, which proposes increasing the state's lodging tax rate. For small, tourism-reliant towns like Florence, this bill poses a serious threat to our local economy and the people who live here.

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,
Marisa Hawk
Florence, OR 97439
Business Owner

May 8th, 2025