

Dear Senator Meek.

Imagine you're a local business owner in Oregon, and you've seen firsthand how the Tourism Investment proposal (HB 2267) has transformed your community. The 1% state Transient Lodging Tax (TLT) introduced in 2003 has been a game-changer. It's not just a tax; it's a lifeline that has brought tourists flocking to your town, boosting your business and the local economy.

Every year, you witness the positive impact of the 70% of TLT funds dedicated to marketing and promotion. This strategic investment has led to a remarkable 7% annual increase in TLT revenue for cities and counties. It's like watching your community blossom, with more visitors, more business, and more vibrancy.

However, there's a concern that could affect this thriving ecosystem. Some propose redirecting these funds to public safety and infrastructure projects. While these are undoubtedly important, the worry is that shifting the focus from marketing and promotion might disrupt the steady flow of tourists and the economic benefits they bring. After all, the funds collected before 2003 are already available for such projects; they just need to be managed wisely.

Think about it: 22 years of consistent 7% returns have accumulated into a significant amount, showcasing the success of the original legislation. It's a testament to how well the system works when funds are used as intended.

In essence, the passage underscores the importance of maintaining the current allocation strategy to ensure continued growth and prosperity for local communities. It's about preserving the magic that has made Oregon a top destination for tourists and a thriving place for businesses like ours.

Please help us maintain the status quo regarding local tourism funding.

Thank you for your consideration.

Patrick Nofield
ORLA Board Chair