

Dear Representative Helm and Senator Gorsek

I am writing in support of HB 2977.

Oregon's wildlife and natural places are interwoven into the essence of Oregon and to what it means to be an Oregonian. The time is long past due for us to secure a funding source with a logical connection to protecting what makes us such a great place to live and visit. *The proposed increase to the state transient lodging tax is exactly what is needed.*

**We've studied the issue for decades without taking action.**

My thesis from the University of Oregon in 1987 was an evaluation of more than 30 potential funding mechanisms to support non-game wildlife programs in Oregon. At numerous other times the state has conducted similar evaluations and yet has consistently failed to adequately fund state programs to protect our natural heritage.

**Other states are taking action and Oregon is getting left behind.**

As a state, Oregon spends less on natural resources than many other states. Long-term, we stand to lose the competitive advantage - our great natural assets - that make us an attractive place to live and visit. And, our state transient lodging tax is among the lowest in the country. Just this month Hawaii passed a similar new tax ([article about Hawaii green fund](#)). Without a durable funding source to protect our nature and wildlife, we risk killing the metaphorical goose that laid the golden egg.

**The transient lodging tax is logically connected to protecting Oregon.**

A vital natural Oregon is crucial to our health and well-being and is an important pillar of our economy, including through tourism.

**Oregonians want their transient lodging tax to be used to protect the environment.**

The Oregon State University Sustainable Tourism Lab recently surveyed Oregonians and found that across all demographics, the environmental impact of tourism was their number one concern. When asked, "how would you like tax revenue collected through tourism to be reinvested?", the environment was the top priority. ([OPB interview of the Sustainable Tourism Lab](#))

Please approve HB 2977 to assure our shared future.

Sincerely,

Glenn Lamb, representing myself personally. I am a board member of both the Pacific Birds Joint Venture and the national Land Trust Alliance