

Submitter:

George Schweitzer

On Behalf Of:

Committee:

Senate Committee On Rules

Measure, Appointment or Topic:

HB2977

Dear Chair of the Senate Committee on Rules and Honorable Committee Members,

Please vote no on HB 2977 for the following reasons:

(1) It Makes Oregon less competitive-

Even a modest tax increase could push visitors to lower-cost destinations. Portland's total lodging tax would rise to 17.25%, putting it above San Francisco and Austin — and at the top of West Coast competitors. This directly threatens hotel bookings, meetings, events, and restaurant traffic.

(2) It threatens small and rural economies-

Many communities across Oregon depend on tourism as an economic lifeline. Higher lodging costs could reduce demand and strain local businesses that rely on visitor spending year-round.

(3) It's an unfair shift in responsibility -

The programs this tax aims to fund do not benefit the tourism industry — and even ODFW's own constituents declined to pay for them, it is fiscally irresponsible and ethically wrong to ask hospitality businesses to carry the load for state agencies that already have access to General Fund dollars, federal support, and license revenue.

Hotels in many locations continue to struggle since the pandemic. We cannot afford to lose lodging business to other destinations.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

George Schweitzer

Vice President, West Coast Hospitality

Representing The Benson Hotel-Portland, The Holman Hotel-Salem, & The Independence Hotel-Independence, Oregon