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HISTORIC
BALCH HOTEL
The Magic Is Closer Than You Think
40 South Heimrich Street
DUFUR
Ore. 97021

20 Rooms
Bistro Restaurant
Spa Sanctuary
Boutique Gifts & Sundries

Balch Hotel
40 South Heimrich Street,
Dufur, OR 97021
June 23, 2025

Re: Support HB 2977 (Funding for Conservation)

Dear Senator Nash

My name is Josiah Dean, and I am the innkeeper of the historic Balch Hotel, which is in Dufur, Oregon. I am writing today to request your support of HB 2977, a bill that would, amongst other provisions, establish dedicated, sustainable funding for the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife by raising the state transient lodging tax by 1.25%.

A thriving environment is critical for the success of my business. Many visitors to the Balch Hotel travel from out of state and the country to experience Oregon's natural beauty. A typical itinerary for many of our guests is a day of hiking or fishing in Wasco County before an evening of dinner at the Bistro 1907, our on-site Restaurant which features locally sourced foods.

It upsets me to learn that the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife does not have the funding to protect and recover our state's most at-risk fish and wildlife, especially those our visitors enjoy discovering. For example, our guests enjoy observing avian species such as the Loggerhead Shrike and Lewis's Woodpecker. For those who love fishing, our regional riverways are home to several varieties of Bull Trout and Salmon. Regrettably, many of these species are imperiled.

HB 2977 is a step in the right direction, and the funding it would generate – via a modest increase in our state lodging tax that I believe my visitors would be happy to pay – would directly help at-risk species. Recovering these species through this sustained funding mechanism is a prudent investment in our natural environment and the continued success of our lodging industry.

Thank you for your time and consideration and I encourage you to support HB 2977.

Sincerely,

Josiah Dean
Innkeeper
Balch Hotel