

Submitter:

Carol Pinegar

On Behalf Of:

Committee:

Senate Committee On Rules

Measure, Appointment or Topic:

HB2977

Dear members of the Senate Rules Committee,

I am writing to urge you to support HB 2977. This bill would create long-term, dedicated funding to recover Oregon's most imperiled fish, wildlife, and habitats. Oregon is so special, home to a diverse flora, fauna, and the habitats that support them. It's a primary reason I moved here more than 40 years ago and chose to raise my family here. However, climate change and other natural and human-made impacts put the future of Oregon's wildlife, wildflowers and their habitats at risk. In Oregon, 300 species are classified as greatest conservation need and 11 habitats as conservation concern. To make sure all species thrive in Oregon we need bold, proactive investments in their recovery. The bill also allocates funds for wildlife stewardship, Oregon Conservation and Recreation Fund, anti-poaching efforts, wildlife connectivity and invasive species control – which further bolster wildlife conservation in the state.

An independent economist has analyzed the fiscal impact of the bill and found: It would have no impact on spending based on evidence from comparable states. Higher lodging tax rates do not negatively impact lodging spending or outdoor recreation's contribution to our state's GDP.

If the bill passes, Oregon would still have the 3rd lowest lodging tax rates in the country; only Alaska and California are lower.

The bulk of the in-state lodging tax revenue would be from out-of-state visitors (63%). HB 2977 would provide a steady, sustainable source of funds to the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife to recover Oregon's most imperiled species and habitat and enhance biodiversity – all of which contribute to Oregon's tourism and outdoor recreation economy.

Please support HB 2977 today. Thank you!