

Submitter:

Marilyn Costamagna

On Behalf Of:

Committee:

Senate Committee On Rules

Measure, Appointment or Topic:

HB2977

I am writing to urge you to pass HB2977.

The proposed transient lodging tax increase of 1.25% would be assessed on travelers, be they Oregonians or tourists from elsewhere who are enjoying Oregon's natural wonders as they travel through the state.

This nominal tax would provide a projected \$30 million in annual revenue to protect and improve Oregon's species and habitats that have the greatest need for conservation. Hence, tourists and Oregonians would be able to enjoy the results of their contribution for decades to come.

Included in the bill, would be an accompanying stewardship program to educate the public about wildlife interactions and more. The effects of that program would have the potential to help the public to understand and to respect and to hopefully want to protect nature's treasures even more personally and responsibly.

The funds would also seem to bolster anti-poaching and invasive specie management across the state. That balance of nature is so vital to preserve and to protect. There are also some provisions included in the bill that would help to ensure the critically important continuation of wildlife conservation in the state.

Bottom line: HB 2977 in essence provides 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 would contribute to Oregon's tourism and outdoor recreation economy. In turn this yes vote will keep Oregon as a leader in combatting the effects of climate change and other natural and human-made impacts which could potentially put Oregon's diverse array of flora, fauna, and the habitats that support them at risk.

As the legislative stewards of this state's natural resources I, a constituent, am asking you to please consider voting yes on HB 2977. Let us all join together to be stewards of Oregon, its land and its flora and its fauna.