

Submitter:

Sharon Konopa

On Behalf Of:

Committee:

House Committee On Revenue

Measure, Appointment or Topic:

HB4148

Dear Chair Nathanson and House Revenue Committee Members,

Please Vote No on HB4148—Cities can already impose transportation and public safety fees on utility bills.

I am really surprised this bill even survived after last sessions load of testimony in opposition. If you support this bill, then you are taking away the only source of funds we Oregonians have for enjoyment in our own communities with concerts, events, activities, festivals and recreation. Why would you even consider changing the allocation for TLT to pay a few city staff desk job salaries, which will take away funds to attract events at expo centers, festivals, marketing and more? Reducing the split to 40% for tourism will gut that program. There would barely be enough to fully fund the agencies that work hard for tourism in our state and benefit our economy.

I have thirty years' experience with city government, including budgets. Cities used to have just their tax base to fund services along with operating tax levies. Now many cities impose a city service fee on utility bills to pay for general fund programs, public safety, parks, libraries, streets, etc. and some seem to use it now as if it was an open check book. Please don't buy into the arguments from cities they need the funds for roads. The amount Albany would receive with this 30% in TLT, might reconstruct two city blocks a year! Cities have the transportation fee avenue for more street funding if they need it, so there is no need to dip into the funds of TLT. When is enough, enough? Your constituents will end up sitting at home with less community events to attend. Your vote will show us your priority, by having Oregonians be happy in their communities with activities or just pay for a few desk jobs? Can you honestly believe this bill is more important?

If you change this tourism allocation, I guarantee it won't be enough and cities and counties will keep coming back or try and dip into other funds.

Please vote no on HB 4148.

Thank you, Sharon Konopa, Former Mayor of Albany.