

Submitter: Glenn Newland

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Revenue

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4148

House Bill 4148, along with its Senate companion SB 1562, would allow local jurisdictions to redirect a larger portion of transient lodging tax (TLT) revenue away from tourism and economic development uses.

I am writing to oppose a change in the distribution of this revenue in a different manner.

I understand that these bills could fundamentally alter how Oregon's visitor economy is funded and sustained. (During a recent Lane County budget committee meeting, county leaders publicly discussed the potential use of lodging tax revenue to help fund public safety services.)

The visitor economy is a traded sector. Visitor spending brings new dollars into local communities and supports assets that residents use and value. This is not a critique of public safety needs. It is a clear example of why lodging tax must remain purpose-bound if it is to continue generating community benefit over time.

As a volunteer member of the Lane Arts Council, for the past 5 years, I have witnessed a decrease and negative impact of lost federal funding. Our organization relies on these funds to provide opportunities for K-12 students, in multiple districts, and local mentor artists to work together. We also provide opportunities for our community to gather and celebrate every month at events like the First Friday ArtWalk. These events drive diverse community members to our downtown area in Eugene, benefiting the many businesses in that area while building a sense of shared wellbeing during increasingly tense political times.

In Lane County, lodging tax investment supports:

- locally owned businesses and main street vitality
- restaurants, food carts and beverage producers
- arts, culture and performance venues
- sporting events, tournaments and meetings
- outdoor recreation access and providers
- nonprofit and community-serving organizations
- family-wage jobs

Please make every effort to preserve this funding as it was intended to support our businesses and community.

Thank you.