

Submitter: Jose Gonzalez
On Behalf Of: La Familia Cider
Committee: House Committee On Revenue
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4148

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony. This bill would do a few things in addition to cause confusion. First it would break the trust between state and all the businesses and employees who work in the hospitality industry. These employees depend on every single customer and every single tip. Just one good day of tips for them can mean the difference between paying rent in full or just going out themselves to being served on. As you know hospitality workers have one of the lowest average wages in the state because of the nature of the work.

The tourism agencies, like Travel Salem, have had to navigate extremely complex waters when it comes to bringing people in to enjoy what our region has to offer. No longer is it them placing ads in magazines or attending conferences, it is super technical and their work now looks like it's coming from a tech company. The good part is that every single dollar can be tracked with real time analytics, they know what is effective and what is not. They can track if someone in Minnesota saw one of their ads, clicked on it and eventually booked a trip from it. I was a city councilor and I know cities are not able to account for dollars in this way. So, to take funds earmarked for increasing tourism, which is what us as taxpayers and hospitality businesses like hotels, have been promised would cause a huge loss of trust and eventually jobs. A few extra customers a week can make the difference between an employee working their full shift or being texted an hour before their shift starts to not come in because it's been too slow.

I volunteer for an organization that represents hundreds of Latino owned businesses in the Willamette valley. Many of them depend on local tourism, we are currently working with Travel Salem on highlighting them and plan to attract people as far as northern California.

I know we are all needing new revenue, but this one just doesn't make sense since it's taking away from the success of the way it's currently working. If it wasn't working, no one would look at it so it's punishing success and making the people in this industry pay for doing what we tasked them to do in the first place.

Thank you for your time,

Jose Gonzalez
Owner of La Familia Cider
Former Salem City Councilor
Vice President of the Latino Business Alliance