

Submitter: David Reid
On Behalf Of: Astoria- Warrenton Area Chamber of Commerce
Committee: House Committee On Revenue
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4148

The Astoria-Warrenton Area Chamber of Commerce consists of 600 members representing all aspects of our local economy. We strongly oppose HB4148 as it will have serious negative consequences, not just for the hospitality industry but for our entire area. Proper tourism management is critical for these communities as it not only markets and promotes visitation, it spreads the impacts over longer seasons and among more sites, and it helps manage HOW people come and how they treat the locals and environment.

Make no mistake, reducing spending on tourism management will reduce the number of visitors and result in a much shorter tourist season, leaving many businesses unable to survive the down time. It will result in visitors behaving differently when they come, with less care for the environment. It will hurt our state.

It is a false narrative that "people will come anyway" and "we've already been discovered, so why advertise?". Visitors have choices and if we want them to spend money here (we do), we need to continue to market to them, give them a reason and inspiration to come, and be top of mind at the moment they make a decision. Disneyland has "already been discovered" and yet they market constantly to keep top of mind and to set correct expectations in advance.

Tourism management also includes ensuring that each place gets to tell its own story, rather than letting "top ten" lists and AI bots send visitors to the same small number of congested sites. Further, tourism management on the coast includes environmental protection, disability access for locals and visitors, food systems improvements, support for arts and culture, and more.

And tourist dollars don't just support hospitality workers. Plumbers, electricians, transportation workers, broadcasters, medical workers, longshoremen, and nearly every other trade and professional is affected by the health of the tourism industry. Those dollars provide the things and places that make living here worthwhile, including theaters, museums, libraries, restaurants, parks, etc.

The current splits already allow for cities and counties to account for the increased cost of services to visitors. And it should be noted that the hospitality industry was promised a robust marketing effort in exchange for being one of the only services with a sales tax in Oregon. That industry has been well rewarded for making that sacrifice and the rest of us have benefited along with them.

Please vote no on HB4148.