

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony regarding House Bill 4148.

I respectfully write in opposition to HB 4148 due to its potential to divert dedicated tourism investment funds away from their intended purpose and, in doing so, weaken one of Oregon's most effective economic development engines.

Tourism funding is not a discretionary expense — it is a **strategic investment** that delivers measurable returns to the state. Visitor-generated revenues support thousands of Oregon jobs, small businesses, and rural communities, while also generating significant lodging tax, payroll tax, and income tax revenues that directly benefit state and local governments. When tourism dollars are redirected for non-tourism purposes, the long-term impact is a reduction in visitation, economic activity, and ultimately public revenue.

Importantly, tourism promotion funds are **self-sustaining** and performance-driven. They are generated by visitors, reinvested to attract future visitors, and multiplied across sectors such as lodging, food service, transportation, retail, and outdoor recreation. Diverting these funds breaks that cycle and shifts the financial burden away from visitors and onto Oregon residents and local businesses.

Oregon's tourism economy is especially critical to **rural and gateway communities**, where alternative economic drivers are limited and seasonal visitation often determines whether businesses remain viable year-round. Weakening tourism promotion disproportionately harms these communities and risks permanent job losses.

While the fiscal challenges facing the state are real, repurposing dedicated tourism funds is not a sustainable solution. It offers short-term relief at the expense of long-term economic health, reduced competitiveness with neighboring states, and diminished revenue growth over time.

I respectfully urge the Legislature to preserve the integrity of tourism investment funds, maintain their original intent, and work collaboratively with industry stakeholders to ensure accountability, transparency, and continued strong returns for Oregon's economy.

Thank you for your consideration and for your service to the people of Oregon.

Sincerely,

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