

Feb. 9, 2026

House Committee Revenue  
Oregon State Legislature  
900 Court Street NE  
Salem, OR 97301



RE: Oppose House Bill 4148, in relation to changes in local taxation and the use of local transient lodging tax revenue;

Dear Chair Nathanson, Vice Chair Reschke, Vice Chair Walters, and members of the House Committee on Revenue:

My name is Eli Matthews and I'm the President & CEO of The Chamber of Medford & Jackson County, representing 1,100 businesses in Southern Oregon. I am writing on behalf of the Board of Directors for The Chamber in opposition of HB 4148, which would change the split of allowable uses of net local Transient Lodging Tax (TLT).

The purpose of TLT is to drive economic growth and job creation across the state, thereby strengthening communities through visitor spending. Changing the existing TLT formula for allowable uses by diverting more funds to non-tourism-related purposes jeopardizes economic security and limits Oregon's economic growth potential. A strong tourism economy keeps businesses thriving, which sustains vital tax revenue for municipalities that already fund essential city services and community infrastructure.

TLT is a proven and effective tool for economic development. In Medford, we have witnessed how the proper utilization of TLT and strong public-private partnerships leads to an investment in building tourism-related facilities such as Lithia & Driveway Fields and the Rogue Credit Union Community Complex (Rogue X). The constant dialogue and collaboration between our local municipality and the private sector have ignited an era of tourism development in our community. Three new hotels are planned to open by 2027, and Medford residents passed a local TLT measure in November for the purpose of building a conference/meeting facility as the anchor attraction for a \$500 million conceptional project – potentially the largest public-private partnership in Jackson County history. The project is expected to transform the City of Medford and its downtown core with the expectation to increase visitor expenditures during non-peak tourist season, sparking economic advancement, not only in the tourism and hospitality sector, but for the city and region.

Over the past 21 years, the return on investment from TLT has supported tourism promotion and tourism-related facility development that attracts new and repeat visitors to communities throughout the state. In that timeframe, visitor spending in Oregon has doubled from \$6.5 billion to \$14.3 billion in 2024. Jackson County has similar results, seeing visitor expenditures increasing from \$352 million in 2003 to \$730 million in 2024.

Maintaining the current TLT formula supports Oregon's economic prosperity and protects the investment of local tourism marketing and development programs that increase visitation, generate spending in our communities and supports year-round employment. All of which contribute to a thriving community.

We urge you to oppose HB 4148 and continue to strategically invest in tourism by allowing TLT to be utilized for its intended purpose.

Sincerely,

Eli Matthews, IOM, President & CEO, The Chamber of Medford & Jackson County