

Submitter: Jeremy Carney

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Revenue

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4148

Chair Nathanson, Vice Chair Reschke, Vice Chair Walters and Honorable Members of the Committee:

For the record, my name is J.B. Carney, and I am a resident of Eugene. I am submitting this testimony in opposition to HB 4148.

I'd like to begin with one of my favorite quotes:

"If you build a place where people want to visit, you'll build a place where people want to live. If you build a place where people want to live, you'll build a place where people want to work. If you build a place where people want to work, you'll build a place where business wants to be. And if you build a place where business wants to be, you'll have built a place where people want to visit." — Maura Gast

I first experienced Eugene as a visitor and was immediately captivated. It was magical, and I quickly knew I wanted to make it my home. Nearly 15 years later, I still feel the same way. This story illustrates the power of the Transient Lodging Tax (TLT) when it is used as intended.

TLT is far more than just "putting heads in beds." It is a strategic tool that drives economic growth, attracts talented residents, supports local businesses, and strengthens community services.

Currently, the hospitality and tourism sector accounts for 1 in 9 jobs in Lane County, supporting thousands of families who rely on the stability of TLT. Beyond jobs, TLT funds essential community services, including rural programs, the City's Library, Recreation and Cultural Services, grants, public safety, and parks. Visitors also support roads and infrastructure through gas taxes and contribute to the local economy via income and property taxes.

The idea that visitors or the visitor economy "take more than they give" is simply false.

Destination Management Organizations (DMOs) are often misunderstood. They are not just "marketing teams" creating catchy ads; they are essential partners who do work in the community that would otherwise go unsupported.

In hearing testimony this week I have come to believe that many people think that

DMOs receive the entirety of the 70% split. Again, this is not accurate. In Lane County, our DMO receives only 30% of the 70% dedicated to tourism. The remaining portion goes to support other important work throughout the county.

TLT only works when it is continually reinvested. HB 4148 does not create new revenue; it redirects funds away from a proven, well-functioning system. Disrupting this cycle threatens the stability of the very tax base this bill depends upon.

As a resident and career hospitality and tourism professional, I respectfully urge you to oppose HB 4148. For the sake of our jobs, our economy, and our community, please vote against this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit my testimony.

Sincerely,

Jeremy Carney