

JANEEN SOLLMAN
STATE SENATOR
DISTRICT 15



OREGON STATE SENATE

3/04/2026

Secretary Rutledge,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit a vote explanation on HB 4134A

Oregon's outdoor recreation industry is one of our greatest economic assets — contributing 2.6% to our state's GDP, higher than the national average. It has grown significantly in recent years. But that growth has come without the meaningful investment needed to protect the natural resources driving it. Climate pressures and increased tourism are taking a toll, and we cannot afford to take these landscapes for granted.

Put simply, this is good economic policy. Outdoor recreation is a \$16.2 billion industry, and at its heart are the wildlife and habitats that draw people here in the first place. We have been failing to invest in their recovery. This bill corrects that.

The funding mechanism is fair. On average, 63% of Oregon visitors come from out of state. Revenue from this modest lodging tax increase flows in from outside Oregon and gets reinvested right here at home, reducing pressure on our general fund both now and in the future.

Why do people visit? According to a 2021 Travel Oregon survey, 90% of visitors come here specifically for our natural scenic beauty, like our beautiful 362 miles of public beaches. Wildlife and nature-based tourism are not a side benefit, they are the draw.

Finally, to those concerned this will hurt tourism or deter conventions, the data does not support that. Oregon's own numbers show visitor volume continued to grow even when the state TLT increased from 1% to 1.8% in 2016. And according to event management sources, reputable event planners prioritize things like transit access, venue capacity, and public safety, room rates rarely make the list. This is a small ask with a significant return. I am proud to vote yes.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Janeen Sollman". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Senator Janeen Sollman
Senate District 15