



OREGON HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

February 25th, 2026

Timothy G. Sekerak
Chief Clerk of the House
State Capitol Building
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Vote Explanation on HB 4134 A-Engrossed

Dear Chief Clerk Sekerak,

In Oregon, we pride our breathtaking natural landscapes. Oregon's wildlife and natural habitats are not just scenic backdrops — they are part of our identity and a cornerstone of our economy. Visitors come from around the world to experience the beauty of places like the Columbia River Gorge and the Oregon Coast. Protecting these spaces protects our long-term prosperity but also protects the wildlife which live in these spaces.

Let me be clear- Two truths can exist in the same place: We can be pro-business and pro-wildlife. Too often, we are told we must choose between them. But the truth is — we don't.

Across our state, including rural and tourism-dependent communities, hotel owners — many of them BIPOC entrepreneurs and family-owned businesses — have invested their life savings into building welcoming spaces for travelers. And, as with all industries- hotels are not a monolith. These business owners create jobs, often employ immigrant workers, generate local revenue, and anchor our main streets. They deserve policies that provide clarity, fairness, and stability so they can succeed.

My concern with this bill is it will not be just a one-time tax. We are at a moment in time wherein we must address tax reform, as a larger conversation, rather than continuing these one-off bills. What will happen once these funding levels needs to be increased? When that time comes, I will not vote in favor for another tax increase for these businesses. While we have a duty to look at Oregon as a whole, I have a fiduciary duty to my constituents. I will not vote in favor of any further one-off taxes on this matter. The work now begins to reform our state revenue system.

Through that work, we can safeguard wildlife and the lands that define us. We can support BIPOC hotel owners and small businesses. We can do both with integrity.

This is about balance. It's about equity. I look forward to convening interested communities in this work. Protecting these spaces protects our long-term prosperity but also protects the wildlife which live in these spaces, this is why I voted yes on this bill.

SUE RIEKE SMITH
STATE REPRESENTATIVE
HOUSE DISTRICT 26



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Sincerely,

Susan R. Rieke Smith, El. D.

Oregon State Representative - House District 26