

Submitter: Sara Sherman
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Emergency Management, General Government, and Veterans
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3556

Dear Chair Tran, Vice-Chair Grayber, Vice-Chair Lewis, and members of the House Committee on Emergency Management, General Government, and Veterans,

I work in the hospitality industry in Crook County Oregon. I am writing to express my strong opposition to HB 3556.

As a dedicated advocate for our local economy and community growth, I have seen firsthand how vital tourism is to Central Oregon. Our region's natural beauty, outdoor recreation, and cultural heritage make it a prime destination for visitors, and strategic investment in tourism has played a crucial role in strengthening our economy and the success of our lodging facility.

Collaboration between our local DMO, Visit Central Oregon, and Travel Oregon has been essential in driving economic growth and creating jobs in rural areas like ours. Over the past few years, they have worked diligently to expand tourism development and marketing efforts, particularly during non-peak travel seasons. This strategy has helped provide year-round job security, stabilize local businesses, and sustain our economy. Tourism dollars and the dedicated efforts of our local DMOs have played a vital role in driving visitors to our area, directly contributing to the success and growth of our hotel.

The positive impact of a thriving and vibrant Central Oregon, goes far beyond just financial figures — though the benefits of tourism spending are undeniable. The true return on investment is seen in a healthier, happier, and more stable community — an outcome that is truly priceless. I urge you to maintain the current TLT distribution. If passed, this bill could ultimately worsen the very funding challenges it aims to address.

I strongly ask that you oppose HB 3556 to ensure continued investment in Oregon's tourism industry. Your support will allow our area to maintain strategic planning efforts, sustain vital programs, and continue promoting Central Oregon as vibrant travel destinations.

Thank you for your time and for considering this testimony. We are committed to supporting the growth and livability of our community while preserving the natural beauty that makes Central Oregon so special.

Sincerely,
Sara