



March 20, 2025

House Committee On Emergency Management, General Government, and Veterans  
Oregon State Legislature  
900 Court Street NE  
Salem, OR 97301

**RE: Request to Move House Bill 3556 to the House Committee on Revenue Without Recommendation**

**Chair Tran, Vice-Chairs Grayber and Lewis, and Members of the Committee,**

On behalf of the Gearhart Police Department, we urge you to move House Bill 3556 to the House Committee on Revenue without recommendation so it can receive the critical financial and policy debate it demands.

Tourism may boost Oregon's economy, but it places an increasing and unsustainable burden on public safety—especially law enforcement. In cities like Gearhart, visitor-driven incidents result in more calls for service, arrests, traffic collisions, and strain on jail and court systems. Yet under current law, we lack the flexibility to use new or increased Transient Lodging Tax (TLT) revenue to meet these rising demands.

ORS 320.350 mandates that 70% of new TLT funds be spent on tourism promotion and facilities, leaving only 30% for other local needs—regardless of the clear and growing public safety impacts of tourism.

In Clatsop County, the impacts are undeniable. From 2019 to 2024, visitors made up roughly one-third of all jail bookings, arrests, and tickets, and 15% of crime victims. These pressures are compounded during peak seasons, while rural fire and EMS agencies—many volunteer-staffed—struggle to keep up with increasing emergency calls.

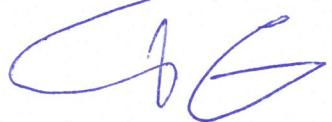
HB 3556 would allow tourism-impacted communities like Gearhart to direct TLT revenues toward law enforcement and emergency response—where the need is immediate and growing. Safe

communities aren't just good for residents—they're essential to tourism itself. Visitors expect and deserve safety when they travel.

We strongly urge you to advance HB 3556 to the House Committee on Revenue without recommendation, so this urgent issue can receive the full attention it deserves.

**Thank you for your time and consideration.**

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "JG".

Josh Gregory, Police Chief  
City of Gearhart