



Crook County

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March 19, 2025

To: House Committee on Emergency Management, General Government, and Veterans

Re: Language Clarification Request in Support of HB 3556 – Extending Permissible Uses of Transient Lodging Tax

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

I am writing to express my support for House Bill 3556, which proposes vital amendments to the permissible uses of net revenue from local transient lodging taxes. This bill is crucial for communities like Crook County, where the balance of supporting a thriving tourism industry and maintaining essential public services and infrastructure is an ongoing challenge.

As a destination for countless visitors each year, Central Oregon faces increased pressures on our public safety services and infrastructure. The current restrictions on the use of transient lodging tax (TLT) revenue limit our ability to effectively address these growing demands. House Bill 3556 offers a much-needed solution by extending the permissible uses of these funds to include not only tourism promotion but also public safety and community infrastructure.

This legislation does not mandate changes to existing financial allocations but rather provides the flexibility for cities and counties to address their most pressing needs. Whether it is enhancing our fire, EMS, and police services or upgrading our water, wastewater, transportation, parks, and public amenities, the ability to allocate funds more broadly is essential for our community's wellbeing.

In Crook County, where our permanent residents bear the brunt of the costs associated with tourism, the passage of House Bill 3556 would be a significant step forward. We are committed to ensuring that our community remains a safe and welcoming place for visitors and residents alike. By supporting this bill, you are helping us achieve that goal.

In conclusion, House Bill 3556 represents a pivotal opportunity for Crook County and other local governments to enhance their capacity to support the dual demands of tourism and resident services effectively. The flexibility provided by this bill will enable us to tailor our strategies to the unique needs of our community, ensuring both safety and sustainable growth. Your support for this legislation is not just an investment in the flexibility of fund usage; it is an investment in the future vitality

and safety of our communities. We appreciate your consideration and look forward to your support.

Sincerely,

X

Susan M Hermreck
Susan Hermreck
County Commissioner