

Submitter: Gordon Feighner
On Behalf Of: ORLA
Committee: House Committee On Emergency Management, General Government, and Veterans
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3556

My name is Gordon Feighner. I am co-owner with my wife of Jam on Hawthorne, a popular breakfast restaurant in SE Portland, and I serve on the board of the Oregon Restaurant and Lodging Association. I am urging you to vote no on HB 3556 as it will allow for increased taxes on lodging and reductions in expenditures that are currently allocated towards promoting our state's tourism industry.

Oregon has done an amazing job increasing our profile as a tourist destination over the past couple of decades, and our hospitality businesses have thrived as a result. A healthy travel industry allows businesses like ours to employ Oregonians and support our local communities. HB 3556 would cause twofold damage to Oregon's tourism industry, by allowing localities to increase lodging taxes that are paid by tourists, and by shifting money from tourism promotion to services that should be the responsibility of the local government's general fund. No other industry in Oregon is subject to a specific sales tax like the lodging industry is, and it is only fair that the majority of the funds collected from such a tax are allocated to driving additional tourism and travel.