



101 South A Street, PO Box 155, Springfield, OR 97477
541-746-1651 | www.springfield-chamber.org

May 5, 2026

Lane County Budget Committee
RE: Transient Lodging Tax Fund Use

Dear Members of the Lane County Budget Committee,

On behalf of the Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce, I am writing to express concern regarding the proposed FY2026–2027 budget adjustment that reallocates a portion of unallocated Transient Lodging Tax (TLT) revenue from its intended use for facility investment to public safety.

We want to be clear: this is not a concern about current tourism promotion efforts or existing program funding. We appreciate that the proposal does not impact Travel Lane County, local museums, or community-based allocations currently supported by TLT.

Our concern is strategic and long-term. At a minimum, we believe these funds should be preserved until the County has completed its evaluation of potential facility investments and can make a fully informed decision about their use.

The hospitality and tourism sector supported the 2% TLT increase with the understanding that these funds would be invested to grow the tax base through tourism-related facilities and infrastructure. Maintaining consistency in how dedicated funds are used is important to the business community, as predictability in public policy decisions directly influences private-sector confidence and long-term investment.

The currently proposed allocation diverges from that shared intent and redirects resources away from their role in generating new economic activity and supporting job growth. Over time, that activity is what expands the tax base and helps communities sustainably fund the services they rely on. While we value our partnership with Lane County and share a commitment to supporting essential services, including public safety, this approach does not provide a durable, long-term funding solution. Addressing structural budget challenges requires continued focus on growing the underlying economic base. Strategic investment in tourism-generating facilities is intended to do just that by creating and sustaining year-round jobs, strengthening business activity, and expanding the resources available for core services over time.

We urge you to preserve the intent and flexibility of these unallocated TLT funds for catalytic facility investments. We remain committed to working in partnership with the County to advance solutions that both address immediate needs and strengthen Lane County's long-term economic vitality.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "V. Mikkelsen".

Vonnie Mikkelsen

President and CEO, Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce