



To: The Oregon State House Committee on Housing and Human Services
From: Marissa Bennett, Resident Camp Director, Camp Namanu, Camp Fire Columbia
Date: April 3, 2015
Re: Testimony in Support off HB 3292

Chair Kenny-Guyer and Members of the Committee, my name is Marissa Bennett and I am the Resident Camp Director for Camp Namanu, located near Sandy, Oregon and operated by Camp Fire Columbia. I serve on the Local Council of Leaders for the Oregon Trail Section of the American Camp Association as the Professional Development Chair. I also served on the advisory committee to the Oregon Health Authority for the last revision of the Organizational Camp Rules (ORS 333-030). I appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 3292, which will clarify the responsibilities of organizational camps and recognize the difference between the programs we are run at our facilities and the programs run at our facilities by outside renter of our sites.

Camp Namanu has been in operation at our current site since 1924. In 2014 we served over 1600 youth through our resident summer camp program. That program runs for only 8 weeks during the summer. In order to maintain our beautiful 552 acre site, which is highly versatile and close to Portland, we find it necessary and viable to rent our facilities to other non-profits for events such as outdoor school and scouting events, to private parties for family reunions and weddings, to businesses for meetings and retreats, and to production companies for and filming. In 2014 over 20 groups and 5000 individuals visited our site for events like these.

As a youth serving agency, we assume full responsibly for creating safe facilities and for the participants in our own programs and events. We are fully accredited through the American Camp Association, meaning we open up our camp facilities, procedures and programs for regular review and inspection by this 3rd party agency to ensure we are continually meeting the highest industry standard for health and safety at Camp Namanu. In a rental situation, HB 3292 would allow us to more clearly define the responsibilities of the landlord (camp owner) and the responsibilities of the tenant (camp renter), so that we can work together to better manage and ensure the health and safety of all participants using our facilities through a rental group. Camping professionals throughout the state, including myself, have worked with the Oregon Health Authority to try to address these concerns through revisions to the rules. We have repeatedly returned to the need for a change to the statute language so that we can more clearly and consistently hold both camp owners and outside renters to the exceptional health and safety standards we all want for the youth and adults enjoying our sites. HB 3292 would provide the changes necessary for the Oregon Health Authority, in conjunction with organizational camps, to draft rules that better protect all of our campers, families, staff, renters, guests, event participants and communities.

HB 3292 allows us to the flexibility to continue to make our site available to many more individuals than we could through just our own programs, which in turn provides us the revenue to preserve, maintain and improve this amazing property and facility for our communities. Thank you for your support in moving HB 3292 forward.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "M Bennett".

Marissa Bennett
Resident Camp Director, Camp Namanu
Camp Fire Columbia