

OREGON TRIAL LAWYERS ASSOCIATION

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Testimony Before the Senate Committee on
Environment and Natural Resources
In Support of SB 643
Arthur Towers
Oregon Trial Lawyers Association
February 23, 2017

Thank you very much the opportunity to testify today. The Oregon Trial Lawyers Association strongly supports SB 643, which will help keep kids safe on Oregon's rivers and streams.

Our members see the impact of serious injuries on Oregonians and their families every day. The psychological and physical impact of a serious injury can have a lifelong effect. Reducing the number of injuries is a priority for us, as is increasing accountability for those whose negligence causes serious harm.

Our members fight for safety – whether it is highway safety, workplace safety, safety from defective products, or in this case, recreational safety. That is why we help to sponsor a bike helmet safety program, giving away properly-fitted helmets to kids in need.

SB 643 requires those under 18 to wear helmets when out in fast-moving rivers. This is as sensible as the use of seat belts, car seats, and bike helmets.

We see the potential for the bill to be more expansive, but as it is written, it is an excellent step forward to protect our kids. We thank the sponsors for bringing this bill forward, and urge you to **VOTE YES on SB 643**.