



February 27, 2017

RE: Support for HB 2143

House Committee on Economic Development and Trade
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court Street NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

Travel Oregon supports House Bill 2143 to designate the second Saturday in June of each year as the Oregon Outdoor Recreation Day.

Oregon is rich with a diverse set of natural amenities that afford us the ability to recreate outdoors – from surfing our myriad of inlets and coves, to skiing volcanic mountains, to swimming one of the deepest Craters on earth, to hiking the 460-mile of Pacific Crest Trail to cooking hotdogs and beans out camping with our families under the starry skies and Ponderosa Pines.

In addition to outdoor recreation being a primary pastime for many Oregonians, it is also a key reason for why people come to visit. The 2015 Longwoods Visitor Profile study shows that 23 percent of visitors to Oregon say the outdoors is the main purpose of their trip, compared with only 13 percent seeking the outdoors nationally. That 23 percent adds up to huge economic impact for the state. The travel and tourism industry generates \$10.8 billion for the state's economy and directly employs more than 105,000 Oregonians. Bicycle tourism alone injects more than \$1 million a day into the state's economy, bringing in at least \$400 million every year.

Knowing just how important outdoor recreation is to Oregon's economy, Travel Oregon launched an initiative in the summer of 2016 to help improve Oregon's outdoor recreation economy by working collaboratively with a diverse group of stakeholders. This work is aimed at elevating this sector as a key economic driver while contributing to the long-term sustainability of what makes Oregon, Oregon – our publicly owned natural assets.

We believe that designating a day to celebrate and honor Outdoor Recreation it will help raise awareness of how important this sector is to Oregon's economy. In addition, we hope it inspires Oregonians to get outside and visit some of the wonderful off-the-beaten path locales in our great state.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Scott West
Chief Strategy Officer