



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, PHYSICAL EDUCATION, AND LEADERSHIP

February 6, 2020

House Committee on Economic Development
Chair Rep. Lively, Co-Vice Chairs Rep. Fahey, Rep. Wilson, Members of the Committee
900 Court Street NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

Re: Support for HB 4157

Chair Lively, Vice-Chairs Bonham and Fahey, Rep. Wilson:

I am a professor in the Outdoor Adventure Leadership department at Southern Oregon University. We have a comprehensive undergraduate and master degree program that prepares students for Oregon's thriving outdoor economy.

The outdoor industry provides meaningful careers and jobs for our graduates all across Oregon, and has the potential to economically invigorate rural areas where most outdoor activities occur. The HB 4157 allows outdoor entrepreneurs to foster their creativity and tap into much needed funds for startup businesses. I am also a board member of the Oregon Outdoor Alliance and chair of the Southern Oregon Chapter where I have witnessed firsthand the power of the outdoor industry to create meaningful lives. Here in Southern Oregon, many economic endeavors have come to fruition by means of outdoor oriented business such as Sunday Afternoon Hats, Sotar Inflatable Rafts, and Sawyer Oars. I just returned from Bend where I gave a talk on how the power of 'serendipity' in the outdoor industry can flourish in Oregon with the right mindset. Everyday amazing opportunities and chance encounters happen all across Oregon relating to the outdoor industry, sometimes these sparks need a little fuel to ignite, measures such as HB 4157 could provide this power.

Specifically the bill will allow the state to help build the outdoor industry by funding program development, program execution, business education, business mentoring, business advising, business plan development, regional outreach around this state, exposure opportunities and technical assistance in the outdoor gear and apparel industry. Some of the greatest minds come from the outdoor industry, HB 4157 could help spawn the next Hydro Flask, Keen Footwear, Leatherman, Ruffwear, or Danner company, creating lifelong careers that contribute to the overall wellbeing of all Oregonians.

Sincere Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chad Thatcher'.

Dr. Chad Thatcher
Professor of Outdoor Adventure Leadership
Master of Outdoor Adventure & Expedition Leadership
Oregon Outdoor Alliance Southern Oregon Chair
thatchercherc@sou.edu
970-201-2866