

March 4, 2021

Hello Chair Beyer and Members of the Committee,

I'm submitting testimony in support of SB 289 with the -1 amendment, on behalf of the Oregon Trails Coalition.

The Oregon Trails Coalition is a coalition of broad-based, statewide partners dedicated to the preservation, development, and stewardship of a statewide network of sustainable trails that provide access to outdoor recreation and active transportation for all.

Our advisory council includes representatives from more than twenty-five federal, state, and local agencies, trail user groups, outdoor industry and tourism partners, and volunteer organizations. We represent walkers, bikers, runners, equestrians, adaptive equipment users, skiers, snowmobilers, and motorized trail enthusiasts.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Oregonians have demonstrated that time in the outdoors is a lifeline during tough times. In my own family, I'm mom to two 10-year-old boys totally stressed out by online school and the sudden disruption to time spent daily playing with friends. But almost every Friday afternoon, I turn off my computer early, and my kids and I head to the trails in Forest Park. Under the trees, we all breathe a little deeper, and their imaginations take flight as they half run, half leap, half dance down the trail. When I wake my kids up on Friday mornings, instead of whining, they say, "It's fun Friday!"

All Oregonians deserve such a respite in their lives, a chance to breathe with the trees, move their bodies with joy, and find precious moments of peace and well being in the outdoors.

The Oregon Trails Coalition supports SB 289 with the proposed amendment.

Currently, the risk or fear of bias crimes and incidents impacts individuals' abilities to access outdoor recreation on an equitable basis. This bill seeks to reduce and eliminate bias crimes and incidents on state managed property by creating penalties sufficient to provide a deterrent to the perpetrators.

We believe this bill takes important steps in setting standards for penalties and restorative justice activities when a bias crime has occurred on our parks, public lands, and waters.

We believe this bill is an important step toward making Oregon's parks, trails, and recreation sites equally welcoming and accessible to all Oregonians.

We hope to see this bill, with the proposed -1 Amendment, move forward.

Thank you for your work,

Stephanie Noll,
Oregon Trails Coalition