

Submitter: Stephanie Noll
On Behalf Of: Oregon Trails Coalition
Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation
Measure: SB815

January 30th, 2023

Dear Chairs Gorsek and McLain and Members of the Committee:

I'm submitting this testimony in support of SB 815 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, conservation advocates, and volunteer organizations. We represent walkers, bikers, runners, paddlers, equestrians, adaptive equipment users, skiers, snowmobilers, and motorized trail enthusiasts.

The Bridge of Gods is a crucial segment of the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail, a treasured pathway through some of the most outstanding scenic terrain in the United States, spanning from Mexico to Canada. The Bridge or the Gods is also a crucial connector for Oregonians seeking to access a host of outdoor recreation experiences and scenic trails on both sides of the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area.

SB 815 appropriates moneys from the General Fund for expenses related to Bridge of the Gods seismic strengthening. This Oregon contribution to the project is a critical match to Washington funds to also be allocated and to lay the groundwork for a future safe and comfortable bike, pedestrian, equestrian pathway across the bridge.

We hope you will forward this bill and invest in this critical and iconic piece of infrastructure for trail users in our state.

Thank you for your leadership,

Stephanie Noll,
Coalition Director,
Oregon Trails Coalition