



Re: Letter of Support for SB 754

To Senate Committee on Judiciary:

Chair Prozanski, thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in support of SB 754. Also, thank you to Representative Gomberg and Senator Anderson for sponsoring this bill. The Oregon Coast Visitors Association is the Destination Management Organization that oversees tourism marketing and project development from Astoria to the California border on the coast. While many think of restaurants, beaches, lodging establishments and little shops selling trinkets or saltwater taffy when they think of coastal tourism, there also are other amenities that we think should be more accessible to hardworking families on their vacations.

On the coast, we don't have ski resorts. We do have guided kayaking trips, mountain bike tours, horse excursions on the beach, fishing guides and outfitters and a number of other businesses that provide experiences to their consumers. The high cost of insurance to operate these businesses, and the difficulty in securing coverage, are very real problems that either close these businesses or drive up the costs so high that only those with significant means can afford to participate as customers.

This shuts out hard-working families who save all year to take their kids to the Oregon Coast. Maybe their dream is to go deep-sea fishing. The most practical way – and the one most likely to generate a successful trip – is to hire a charter boat or guide. If that cost is out of reach, that family is being denied an experience they will remember and cherish for the rest of their lives.

The Oregon Coast Visitors Association isn't just about bringing people to the coast to stay in high-end luxury resorts. We focus most of our work through the lens of equity. We think people of all demographics and levels of means should be able to enjoy everything the Oregon Coast has to offer, from our world famous seafood to our pristine beaches and all the outdoor fishing, mountain biking, kayaking and other activities that most families in our state and country don't have easy access to enjoy every weekend.

By easing the insurance price burden on the small businesses that make these experiences possible, we can see lower prices and more reasonable opportunities for everyone to be able to come and enjoy not just our free ocean beaches, but everything our coastal wonderland has to offer.

This is about equity. It's about fairness. And it's about opportunity.

Sincerely,

Marcus Hinz, Executive Director

Oregon Coast Visitors Association

*OREGON COAST VISITORS ASSOCIATION*

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