



February 11, 2024

Re: Support for -3 Recreational Immunity Fix Amendment to SB 1576

Dear Chair Prozanski, Vice-Chair Thatcher, and Esteemed Committee Members:

I am writing to support SB 1576-3, which addresses and restores recreational immunity for Oregon's public and private landowners. As the executive director of Visit Corvallis and an active participant in Oregon's tourism and outdoor industry, I have a deep personal investment in the future of our state's natural resources and the legal structures that support their use and enjoyment.

Recreational immunity is a cornerstone of our state's commitment to the outdoors. Protecting landowners from certain liabilities allows more people to enjoy Oregon's natural beauty without fear of undue legal repercussions. This protection is critical not only for landowners' safety and peace of mind but also in fostering a culture of shared responsibility and respect between them and the recreating public.

Tourism is supported by recreational immunity as it encourages the creation and maintenance of trails and recreational spaces. For instance, the Corvallis-to-the-Sea Trail, among Oregon's signature trails supported by Visit Corvallis, would not be feasible without this legal assurance. Trails like these are not just paths through the wilderness; they are economic lifelines to the communities they touch, bringing in visitors and supporting local businesses. The significance of recreational immunity hit home for me as I consider the future of the Corvallis-to-the-Sea Trail. As an Oregonian proud of our state's lush landscapes and dedication to environmental conservation, seeing this trail come to fruition was a poignant testament to what we can achieve when landowner liability concerns are abated. The trail has become a beacon for hikers, cyclists, and tourists, all while fostering sustainable economic growth – a living example of the symbiotic relationship between law, land, and livelihood.

I strongly urge you to address and fix Oregon's Recreational Immunity law in this session with the passage of SB 1576-3. This bill is pivotal to ensuring that improved and unimproved trails have the safeguards necessary to thrive. To benefit our communities, economy, and Oregon's natural heritage, we must restore recreational immunity to its full capacity, reinforcing our state's standing as a premier destination for outdoor enthusiasts.

Thank you for considering my testimony. I trust that you will make a decision that aligns with the best interests of Oregon's natural beauty, its people, and the principle of shared access and responsibility that we hold dear.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Christina Rehkla".

Christina Rehkla
Visit Corvallis, Executive Director