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GORGEFRIENDS.ORG

February 3, 2026

Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Wildfire

RE: SB 1590 – SUPPORT

Chair Golden, Vice-Chair Nash, and Committee Members:

Friends of the Columbia Gorge (“Friends”) is a non-profit organization with approximately 4,000 members. Friends is dedicated to protecting and enhancing the scenic, cultural, recreation, and natural resources of the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area (“Gorge” or “National Scenic Area”).

**Friends strongly supports SB 1590** and its goal of preventing the privatization of our nation’s federal public lands. Public lands protect clean water, wildlife habitat, recreation access, and rural economies. They belong to the American people and should not be privatized. Support for public lands is consistently shown to be very popular in public opinion polling, across the political and geographic spectrum.

Defending our nation’s public lands is central to Friends’ mission of protecting the National Scenic Area. The U.S. Forest Service directly manages approximately 83,000 acres of federally owned lands within the National Scenic Area. These lands support the region’s climate resilience and fuel the thriving recreation economy in the Gorge.

Under the current Presidential Administration, public lands are continuously coming under threat, despite all of the benefits they provide to communities across the country. This bill is a necessary safeguard to ensure that our state’s resources are not used to support the privatization of federal public lands now or ever in the future.

**Please pass SB 1590** and defend our nation’s public lands. Thank you for your time and consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,  
Madison Kenney  
Advocacy & Policy Coordinator