

Submitter: Peter Hazelett
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Commerce and General Government
Measure, Appointment or SB1593
Topic:

Dear Senate Committee,

I am writing to you as an active outdoor user and a constituent who is deeply concerned about the future of outdoor recreation in Oregon. I urge you to support SB 1593, which will restore the enforceability of liability waivers for recreational providers.

The current legal climate regarding liability in our state is devastating to the outdoor community. Because Oregon courts have recently invalidated standard liability waivers, outdoor organizations—including non-profits, small guide services, and land trusts—are facing an insurance crisis. They are seeing premiums skyrocket or are being denied coverage entirely.

I support SB 1593 for the following reasons:

- Restoring Balance: This bill does not protect bad actors. It simply allows adults to voluntarily assume the inherent risks of outdoor activities (ordinary negligence), while still holding providers accountable for gross negligence or reckless misconduct.
- Aligning with Western Neighbors: Oregon is currently an outlier. Washington, Idaho, and California all enforce these standard waivers. By failing to do so, we are putting our local businesses at a severe competitive disadvantage and driving economic activity out of state.
- Preserving Access: Without this fix, the costs will be passed down to users, making the outdoors accessible only to the wealthy. Even worse, many free or low-cost programs (like youth outdoor schools and volunteer trail crews) will be forced to shut down completely due to liability risks.

Outdoor recreation is part of Oregon's identity and a massive economic driver. Please stop the lawsuit abuse that threatens to close our trails and bankrupt our small businesses.

Please vote YES on SB 1593.

Sincerely,

Peter Hazelett
Hood River