

Submitter: Brock Fisher
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Judiciary
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1517
Chairman Prozanski, Vice-Chair Thatcher, and Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

My name is Brock Fisher, and I am the Operations Manager of a small, locally run, lodge and outfitter operating in rural Oregon. Like many outfitters and guides across this state, our business depends on seasonal tourism, narrow margins, and the ability to responsibly manage risk while providing safe, meaningful outdoor experiences for Oregonians and visitors alike.

I am writing to express my opposition to SB 1517.

The issue of unenforceable liability waivers in Oregon directly impacts our business. The current liability environment has become increasingly unsustainable, especially for small operators like us who lack the financial cushion of large corporations. Insurance costs continue to rise, coverage options continue to shrink, and many providers are being forced to scale back operations—or consider closing altogether—not because of unsafe practices, but because Oregon’s legal framework makes responsible risk management nearly impossible.

SB 1517 does not address this broader problem. Instead, it isolates one narrow segment of the recreation economy—ski areas—while leaving thousands of other small businesses and nonprofits fully exposed. Outfitters, guides, climbing gyms, trail organizations, bike parks, volunteer groups, conservation programs, and youth organizations all face the same liability challenges, yet SB 1517 offers them no relief.

This selective approach is not a solution. It does nothing to balance or stabilize the insurance market, nothing to improve access or affordability for the public, and nothing to enhance safety outcomes. It further entrenches Oregon as an outlier among western states, all of which recognize and honor liability waivers as a legitimate risk-management tool.

Perhaps most concerning, SB 1517 distracts from and undermines the broader, more inclusive efforts that many of us support through ORCA2026. That legislation represents a good-faith attempt to address the liability crisis affecting the entire recreation economy, nonprofits and small businesses alike, rather than carving out protection for one industry while leaving everyone else behind.

As a rural, locally-run operation, we do not have lobbyists or large legal teams. We

rely on fair, consistent policy that recognizes the realities of operating outdoor recreation businesses in Oregon. SB 1517 fails to do that.

I respectfully urge you to oppose SB 1517 and instead support SB 1593 and HB 4701—legislation that acknowledges the full scope of the problem and works toward a balanced, statewide solution.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Brock Fisher