

February 5, 2026

Chair Meek and Vice-Chair Drazan
Senate Committee on Commerce and General Government
900 Court Street NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

RE: SB 1593 Recreation Liability Waiver Support

Dear Chairs and members of the Committee,

I am writing to express EDCO's (Economic Development for Central Oregon) support for Senate Bill 1593 from an economic development perspective. Outdoor recreation is a major driver of jobs, small business growth, and tourism in communities across Oregon, particularly in rural and gateway regions. This includes ski areas, which serve as major economic anchors for many mountain and resort communities and support thousands of seasonal and year-round jobs. The current uncertainty around recreational liability has made it increasingly difficult for ski resorts, outfitters, guides, nonprofits, and recreation providers to secure affordable insurance, expand operations, or even remain open. SB 1593 would help restore predictability in the market, align Oregon with neighboring states, and ensure our state remains competitive in attracting visitors, businesses, and investment in the outdoor economy.

By allowing enforceable liability waivers for adult participants while preserving protections against gross negligence and misconduct, this bill strikes a reasonable balance between consumer safety and economic sustainability. A stable liability framework will encourage continued investment in ski area infrastructure, outdoor facilities, and visitor services, while supporting entrepreneurship, workforce retention, and local tax bases tied to recreation and tourism. From an economic standpoint, SB 1593 represents a practical step toward protecting existing jobs and fostering future growth in one of Oregon's most important industries. I respectfully urge your support for this legislation.

EDCO is a private, non-profit organization serving the tri-county region of Crook, Deschutes and Jefferson Counties whose mission is to strengthen communities by creating opportunities that generate new revenue and family wage jobs. Guided by our vision to be the catalyst for economic prosperity for all, EDCO works to recruit new employers to Central Oregon, support entrepreneurs in starting new, scalable businesses, and help existing companies grow and expand. Our client base

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includes some of the highest paying companies who contribute a significant percentage of the tax base in the region.

We hope you will join us in supporting this bill. If you have any questions regarding my comments, please feel free to reach out to me directly. We appreciate the opportunity to share our perspective.

Sincerely,



Jon Stark, CEO
Economic Development for Central Oregon