

Re: SB 1593 SUPPORT

Dear Chair Meek, Vice-Chair Drazan, and members of the committee,

I have become aware that the Oregon Legislature is dealing with issues regarding liability reform as it pertains to outdoor recreation.

As a community volunteer, I help to organize and lead paddling trips and restoration efforts in conjunction with several non-profit agencies (SOLVE, Tualatin Riverkeepers, Willamette Riverkeeper, to name a few). I can say with first-hand experience that these events have many benefits to the community.

- 1) Important work is getting done that benefits the environment (river cleanups, litter pick-up, removal of invasive plants) that might not otherwise occur without organized events run by non-profits.
- 2) Participants are getting valuable time in a natural outdoor environment, which provides benefits to both mental and physical health. Plus, gaining an appreciation for nature can lead to long-term improvements in well-being and desire to protect the environment.
- 3) Organized community events, whether “fun/recreational” outings or work-party type events create an important sense of community and togetherness. We live in a time that is desperately calling for us to stop focusing on our differences and work toward a shared goal and better future. Many of our participants are young adults, and I am so heartened to see their commitment and teamwork exhibited in these outdoor/community events.

I support efforts to reestablish the power of the liability waiver and make Oregon similar to other neighboring states (like Washington and California) so that the important work I’ve described above can continue and Oregonians (and the environment we live in) can thrive.

Sincerely,

Jeff Kohne

Community Volunteer

West Linn, OR