

Submitter: Christopher Laws
On Behalf Of: Western Winter Reps Association
Committee: Senate Committee On Commerce and General Government
Measure, Appointment or SB1593
Topic:

I am writing today as the Northwest board member of the Western Winter Rep Association, a lifelong Oregonian, and someone whose personal and professional life is deeply tied to our state's outdoor recreation economy.

Oregon's ski areas are facing a growing insurance crisis that threatens the long-term viability of our mountain communities, youth programs, and winter tourism economy. Skyrocketing premiums, shrinking coverage options, and legal uncertainty have placed unprecedented strain on local statewide operators who already run on tight margins. These challenges are not abstract—they directly impact local jobs, regional tourism revenue, and public access to outdoor recreation that defines our state's identity. As a board member of the Wester Winter Sports Representative Association, I hear the concerns and fears of this issue on a regular basis from regional reps, local shops and ski areas. At this point, Snowboard and ski hardgood brands are discouraging reps to hold on snow public facing demos in the state of Oregon.

As someone who volunteers countless hours supporting winter sports and community programs, I believe it is in the best interest of Oregonians to reevaluate the current framework governing ski area liability and insurance. Thoughtful, balanced reform can preserve consumer protections while restoring stability and predictability for insurers and operators alike.

I respectfully urge you to engage with industry leaders, community stakeholders, and recreation advocates to explore solutions that will keep Oregon's ski areas safe, accessible, and financially sustainable for generations to come.

I would also ask to use me as a resource for “on the ground” information. I want to get more involved to help make these changes.

Thank you for your time, your service, and your commitment to the people of Oregon.