

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

Dear Committee Members,

I am writing as an Oregon resident and lifelong outdoor recreation enthusiast to express my strong support for SB 1593, the Oregon Recreation Commerce and Affordability Act (ORCA).

Oregon's outdoor recreation opportunities have been a defining part of my life here. From rock climbing gyms where I've built community and strength, to guided mountaineering trips that introduced my family to the beauty of our mountains, to ski lessons that taught my wife how to appreciate this great state, too—these experiences are woven into what makes Oregon home.

But I'm watching these opportunities disappear. In the past year alone, I've seen climbing gyms close their doors, guide services cancel programs, and activity fees skyrocket to cover soaring insurance costs—if coverage is available at all. The outdoor programs that once felt accessible now feel out of reach for many families, including my own.

What troubles me most is learning that Oregon stands virtually alone in this crisis. Our neighboring states of Washington, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, and California all recognize liability waivers as valid legal instruments while still protecting people from gross negligence and intentional harm. Families in those states can access affordable outdoor recreation without the insurance crisis we face here. Why should Oregon families have fewer opportunities to experience the outdoors simply because our state refuses to adopt practices that work everywhere around us?

I understand the importance of consumer protection, and I appreciate that ORCA maintains critical safeguards. Recreation providers still cannot waive liability for gross negligence, willful misconduct, or intentional harm. But the current system isn't protecting consumers. It's eliminating the very services we want to use. An unenforceable waiver protects no one when the business has closed or when insurance costs price families out of participation entirely. Scout troops, church camps, conservation groups doing trail work—all are caught in this crisis. We're not just losing businesses; we're losing the community fabric that outdoor recreation creates.

I urge you to pass SB 1593. Oregon's outdoor recreation economy generates over

\$16 billion annually and supports countless jobs, but more importantly, it provides experiences that shape lives, strengthen families, and connect us to the incredible landscape we're privileged to call home. Let's align Oregon with the rest of the West and restore access to the outdoor opportunities that make our state special.

Thank you for considering this testimony and for your service to Oregon.

Respectfully submitted,

Josh deLacy

Bend, Oregon