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February 9, 2026

Senate Committee on Commerce and General Government

RE: Support for SB 1593 – Liability Waiver Reform

Chair Meek and Members of the Committee,

The Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce represents nearly 800 employers and organizations in Lane County. We support policies that strengthen Oregon’s economic competitiveness, promote a stable and predictable business climate, and protect industries that contribute to long-term community prosperity. **We submit this testimony in support of SB 1593.**

Liability waiver reform is essential to safeguarding small business interests and ensuring that Oregon remains competitive and economically vibrant. Oregon businesses currently face significantly higher liability insurance costs than their counterparts in other western states. Recent court decisions have increased legal uncertainty, making it more difficult and costly for businesses engaged in recreation and experiential services to secure affordable insurance coverage. These pressures directly limit job creation and long-term business sustainability.

We also join our destination marketing partners in urging the Legislature to continue work toward inclusion of parental waivers. As currently drafted, the bill clarifies enforceability of waivers signed by adults but does not yet address waivers signed by parents or guardians on behalf of minors. Without this clarification, many family-oriented recreation providers – particularly those that serve youth, families, camps, clinics, and school groups – remain exposed to significant legal risk.

This reform is critical to preserving one of Oregon’s most important economic sectors, the tourism and outdoor recreation economy. Recreation-based businesses support thousands of jobs, generate significant visitor spending, and play an outsized role in rural and gateway communities. Continued escalation of insurance costs and legal exposure threatens the viability of these businesses, with ripple effects across lodging, food service, retail, and local tax bases.

For these reasons, the Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce urges your support of SB 1593. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'V. Mikkelsen'.

Vonnie Mikkelsen

President and CEO, Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce