

Submitter: Heather Harter  
On Behalf Of: Klamath County Chamber of Commerce  
Committee: Senate Committee On Judiciary  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1517

Chair Floyd Prozanski  
Senate Judiciary Committee  
900 Court Street NE  
Salem, OR 97301

Chair Prozanski, Vice-Chair Thatcher, and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Klamath County Chamber of Commerce and the 600 businesses we represent across southern Oregon, I respectfully urge you to oppose SB 1517 as amended by the -6 or -7 amendments and instead support SB 1593.

Outdoor recreation is not a side industry in Oregon. It is a foundational economic driver, particularly in rural communities like ours. From fishing guides and outfitters to lodging providers, restaurants, and tourism-dependent small businesses, recreation fuels local employment and regional vitality.

Unfortunately, the current lack of enforceable liability waivers has created significant instability in Oregon's insurance market. Our members are facing reduced availability of liability insurance, dramatically increased premiums, suppressed wage growth, increased operational costs, and pressure to raise prices for customers

These impacts are disproportionately felt in rural Oregon, where small, family-owned businesses operate on tight margins and cannot absorb unpredictable legal exposure.

While we appreciate the effort behind the -6 and -7 amendments to SB 1517, they do not provide the clarity or predictability necessary for insurers to confidently participate in Oregon's market.

SB 1593 offers a balanced and responsible solution. It restores enforceable waivers for ordinary negligence while maintaining accountability for gross negligence and misconduct. This approach protects consumers, stabilizes the insurance market, and ensures Oregon remains competitive with neighboring western states.

If Oregon wishes to preserve access to safe, affordable recreation and sustain the thousands of jobs connected to it, we must provide a stable and predictable legal framework.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge you to oppose SB 1517 as amended and to advance SB 1593.

Thank you for your consideration and for your service to our state.

Sincerely,  
Heather Harter  
Executive Director  
Klamath County Chamber of Commerce