



February 27, 2026

Representative Ben Bowman, Chair
Representative Lucetta Elmer, Vice-Chair
Representative Hai Pham, Vice-Chair
House Committee on Rules
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court St. NE, Salem, OR 97301

RE: Salem Chamber Testimony in Opposition of SB 1517

Dear Chair Bowman, Vice-Chair Elmer, Vice-Chair Pham, and Members of the House Committee on Rules,

Our organization represents over one thousand (1,000+) local businesses and forty-five thousand (45,000) employees in the Salem area. The breadth and diversity of industries represented by our membership demonstrate an intersection of the small businesses that collectively create our state economy. The Salem Chamber supports a healthy business climate, and healthy recreational activities, but opposes SB 1517.

Restoring the validity of liability waivers for ordinary negligence would allow Oregon businesses engaged in sport, fitness, and other recreational activities to obtain liability insurance at similar costs to our surrounding states. Currently, Oregon businesses pay more for liability insurance, and higher premiums create increased consumer costs and even the elimination of recreational options. While Oregon is competition for business and tourism dollars, restoring the validity of liability waivers would recruit additional investment and economic activity to our state economy. SB 1593 would allow this much-needed protection, while SB 1517 does little to create enforceable liability waivers. SB 1517 contains ambiguous language and is focused on recreational skiing operations while the entire recreational industry needs clarity and relief.

A business engaged in outdoor sporting, agritourism, such as chartered tours of wineries and breweries, fitness centers, and other types of recreation need liability insurance to operate. By placing Oregon onto equal standing with surrounding states, our recreational businesses can enhance our local economy and allow Oregonians and tourists alike to enjoy all that Oregon has to offer. We urge passage of SB 1593 to improve Oregon’s recreational industry and urge no vote on SB 1517.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Tom Hoffert, CEO Salem Area Chamber of Commerce

**Salem Area Chamber
of Commerce**

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Chief Executive Officer

Tom Hoffert
Salem Area Chamber of Commerce