



101 South A Street, PO Box 155, Springfield, OR 97477
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March 2, 2026

RE: Advance SB 1517 Only with the -11 or -15 Amendments

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

On behalf of the Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce, representing nearly 800 employers across the Eugene-Springfield region, we urge you to advance SB 1517 **only with the -11 or -15 amendments**.

Oregon needs a clear statutory fix that restores meaningful enforceability of liability waivers for ordinary negligence and provides the predictability insurers require to stabilize the market.

As the Committee has heard, recent court decisions have created significant legal uncertainty around liability waivers, driving up insurance premiums and reducing coverage availability for recreation, tourism, fitness, youth programming, and experiential businesses that are foundational to our state economy. For small and medium-sized operators, these rising costs directly affect hiring, wages, expansion plans, and in some cases, whether they can continue operating at all.

Oregon remains the only state in the western United States that provides **no enforceability** of liability waivers for ordinary negligence. This outlier status puts Oregon employers at a competitive disadvantage and prolongs the uncertainty that continues to disrupt insurance pricing and availability. Any final policy must apply broadly across the full spectrum of recreation providers, not narrowly to a limited subset, or it will fail to stabilize the broader market.

Recreation businesses are not seeking immunity. They accept accountability for gross negligence and misconduct. What they need is a balanced framework that aligns Oregon with neighboring states and allows responsible operators to manage risk.

We urge you to carefully question and reject any changes that dilute or narrow enforceability, and to ensure SB 1517, as amended, delivers real market stability, not a symbolic compromise that leaves uncertainty intact.

Sincerely,

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

Vonnie Mikkelsen
President and CEO
Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce