

January 30, 2019

Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Natural Resources
Co-Chairs Senator Kathleen Taylor and Representative Jeff Reardon
900 Court Street NE, Room H-178
Salem, Oregon 97301

RE: Support for HB 5527 and Oregon Parks & Recreation Department Budget

Co-Chairs Taylor and Reardon and Members of the Joint Subcommittee:

On behalf of Adventures Without Limits I am writing to express our strong support of HB 5527 and Oregon Parks & Recreation Department Budget. Adventures Without Limits is a 501(c)3 nonprofit, that has dedicated more than 20 years to getting people outdoors to experience the amazing natural environment of the Pacific Northwest. Based in Forest Grove, Oregon, we facilitate outdoor adventure for people of all ability levels, socio-economic status, genders, ethnicities and age. Participants gain new skills and confidence, overcome fears and work toward achieving individual goals. Annually we provide nearly 2,000 participant user days in Oregon's outdoor spaces. While we operate with a variety of Oregon's land management agencies (NF, BLM) we especially value our relationship with OPRD with almost half of our participant user days being held on OPRD sites.

We strongly support policy package 105 funding for outreach and inclusion programs for underserved communities. As an organization committed to opening the outdoors to all Oregonians we are very pleased with the steps OPRD has taken towards inclusion in recent months and are very excited to see the next steps the department will take. This funding will allow OPRD to reach users traditionally excluded from outdoor recreation in the state and take a step towards a truly inclusive parks and recreation program representative of all citizens.

A participant on a recent Adventures Without Limits trip highlighted the need for increased funding and programs focused on underrepresented populations in our parks systems:

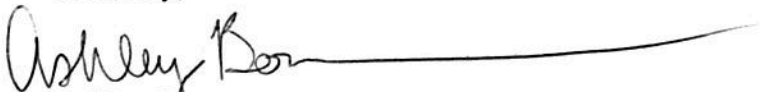
"I love being outdoors, I don't get to be outdoors as much as I would like to...we're supposed to be the outdoor capital of the world pretty much in the pacific NW, and when you're in a wheelchair it's not."

-Libby S, Oregonian, mobility device user

In addition to our support of policy package 105 we are also writing in support of funding for the Office of Outdoor Recreation. Adventures without Limits has been an active stakeholder in the outdoor industry here in Oregon for many years and we have already seen an increase in collaboration, coordination and outreach as a result of this new position. We are very excited to see the wonderful work this office will enable Oregon to accomplish.

Thank you for your time, we greatly appreciate the opportunity to express our support of these measures.

Sincerely,



Ashley Borman
Program Director
Adventures Without Limits
Oregon Outdoors member