

Submitter: Renee Patrick

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources

Measure: SB679

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Testimony in support of SB 679: Oregon Coast Trail

February 15, 2023

I write in support of funding for the closure of gaps in the Oregon Coast Trail, which is truly one of Oregon's most exceptional and least well-known recreational assets.

I am a long-distance hiker who has completed many of the long-distance trails in the country, and have helped develop several notable long trails in Oregon including the Oregon Desert Trail and Blue Mountains Trail.

While I have hiked some of the Oregon Coast Trail, the gaps and dangerous sections that are aligned with roads pose such a safety concern and barrier to an enjoyable and fulfilling hiking experience that I have not thru-hiked the entire trail yet and don't plan to hike it until some of the gaps are closed.

I am quite connected to the long-distance trail community and have heard from fellow hikers that they quit hiking the Oregon Coast Trail because the dangerous road conditions made the hike quite unpleasant.

The Oregon Coast is such an amazing amenity, and the completed trail will be an incredible boon to the economic development and recreation opportunities for both locals and tourists alike.

Fully funding the completion of the Oregon Coast Trail would be a relatively small investment for an enduring recreational asset for Oregonians and visitors alike.