



March 23, 2023

House Committee on Economic Development and Small Business
Chair Janelle Bynum
Oregon Street Capitol
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

Chair Bynum and Committee members,

On behalf of the Bend Chamber's 1,150 members and 8,500 business in Central Oregon, we appreciate the opportunity to provide comments in support of HB 3250 re: State of Sport Task Force.

The outdoor recreation and product industry are a critical sector of our economy in Central Oregon, as the region supports numerous large companies in addition to serving as an incubator for start-ups and local small businesses. We are the proud home of innovative outdoor product companies such as Cascadia Vehicle Tents and Hydro Flask which have both local and national/international impacts.

As a region, we are investing in higher education, an innovation district and an ecosystem that supports the development of this essential part of our economy. Oregon State University – Cascades now offers a degree in outdoor product development and a degree program in Tourism, Recreation, and Adventure Leadership (TRAL). The planned 24-acre innovation district will be at the intersection of research and business in outdoor products, sports performance, and tourism among other disciplines.

The impacts of this work are far reaching, as prior to COVID local recreation enthusiasts and visitors spent more than \$1 billion in Central Oregon. This spending supported almost 13,000 full- and part-time jobs, \$484 million in wages and other compensation and roughly \$560 million in GDP contributions.

As our local outdoor industry grows and diversifies, it benefits the entire state. Now is the time to band together to leverage assets throughout the state to position Oregon as THE leader. The Bend Chamber was a sponsor of State of Sport report released in 2022 which provided the basis for HB 3250. We are excited to continue our engagement and actively participate in the work of the State of Sport Task Force to develop a statewide economic development strategy for this unique niche industry.

Building a competitive, business-friendly Oregon is a guiding principle for the Bend Chamber during the 2023 session, and the passage of HB 3250 would be a welcome start. We urge a yes vote on the bill and thank you for your consideration.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Katy Brooks". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a light blue horizontal line.

Katy Brooks
President & CEO
Bend Chamber of Commerce