

Submitter: Mer Wiren  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: Senate Committee On Judiciary  
Measure: SB1576

Testimony in support of SB 1576-3

To the committee, thank you for your service:

We are homeowners in Lincoln (Waldport) and Benton Counties. We are operators of a coastal vacation rental. We are avid hikers, Beach-walkers, dog walkers, and lovers of outdoors activities. We are people who allow and actively welcome our neighborhood to use our property as a way to gain access to the public lands of the beaches. Dozens of people use my side yard daily in summer and many in winter to reach the beach. Frequently folks thank us and exclaim they "couldn't reach the beach otherwise!" Our point of access has built community.

We really need and support this emergency fix of Recreational Immunity to protect public access to all sorts of outdoor spaces including wild, rugged, undeveloped or minimally developed pathways.

We need it because Oregon's economy includes an important sector of tourism - especially based in outdoor centered activities. The closure of such activities and access would be catastrophic for our tourism.

We need this fix to protect our small towns and cities, our low population counties and our private land owners that provide or allow various kinds of access but don't have the budget to turn every location into a pedestrian highway. Nor is that kind of development desirable or appropriate for outdoor activities. As recent closures have shown, providing and allowing access depends on Recreational Immunity.

The lands of the state belong to all of us. Denying access on widespread scale would be odious and a basic violation of our citizenship. It would break peoples hearts and deny us the spiritual and mental health benefits of going and being in nature.

Furthermore, we need a permanent fix to the protections of Recreational Immunity or the landscape of Oregon and it's economy will be forever damaged.

I urge you to immediately pass the short term measure and to progress proactively to a permanent revision of language securing Recreational Immunity for land owners, land managers, and those managing privately and publicly owned wild outdoor sites.

Thank you

Mer Wiren and family