



2/12/2024

Support for -3 Recreational Immunity Fix Amendment to SB 1576

Dear Chair Prozanski, Vice-Chair Thatcher, and members of the committee:

I am writing to express my strong support for the -3 Recreational Immunity Fix Amendment to SB 1576 on behalf of the Bend Park and Recreation District. Our district manages over 83 miles of multi-use trails, which are vital assets for our community's health, well-being, and economic prosperity.

Trails play a crucial role in our community, offering opportunities for physical activity, mental rejuvenation, and connection with nature. They are integral to the fabric of our community, providing safe spaces for families to explore and enjoy the outdoors. The benefits of trails extend beyond recreation, fostering community connections and supporting local businesses.

However, the threat of liability has become a significant barrier to maintaining and improving these trails. The Recreational Immunity law is essential in encouraging landowners to open their lands to the public for recreational use by providing protection against legal actions resulting from injuries. Without this protection, landowners face the daunting prospect of costly lawsuits, hindering their ability to keep trails accessible and safe for the public.

The -3 Recreational Immunity Fix Amendment is a critical step in addressing this issue. By reinstating recreational immunity for both public and private landowners, this amendment provides the clarity and assurance needed to support ongoing trail maintenance and development projects. It ensures that land managers can continue to make improvements, such as bridges and railings, without fear of increased liability.

Furthermore, restoring recreational immunity promotes equity in access to recreation areas by facilitating trail improvements that cater to a broad range of physical abilities. It also safeguards public resources by directing funds towards park and trail maintenance rather than legal battles. In conclusion, I urge you to pass SB 1576-3 with the language that restores recreational immunity. This amendment is crucial for preserving our trails, enhancing community well-being, and supporting local economies. Thank you for your consideration and leadership on this important issue.

Sincerely,
Andy Sommerville, Trails Supervisor
Bend Park and Recreation District

play for life

Park Services | Don Horton, Executive Director

1675 SW Simpson Ave., Bend, Oregon 97702 | www.bendparksandrec.org | (541) 388-5435



Bend Park &
Recreation
DISTRICT

play for life

Park Services | Don Horton, Executive Director

1675 SW Simpson Ave., Bend, Oregon 97702 | www.bendparksandrec.org | (541) 388-5435