



February 27, 2024

Chair Kropf and Members of the House Committee on Judiciary
900 Court Street, Salem OR

Re: SB 1576 – Support

On behalf of our Oregon membership, local Chapters and statewide volunteer network, Surfrider Foundation is in support SB 1576, with the caveat that there is an interim workgroup established to work through a permanent and meaningful solution for Oregonians to address recreational immunity. Such a workgroup must be convened in a transparent and inclusive manner providing opportunities for key stakeholder engagement and that takes into account recreational and prescriptive rights of access to Oregon's important areas for outdoor recreation.

Surfrider is a grassroots, non-profit environmental organization dedicated to the protection and enjoyment of our world's ocean, waves and beaches for all people. We operate through a powerful volunteer and chapter network in the state of Oregon with thousands of supporters engaged in our programs, outreach, environmental stewardship and grassroots organizing. At the local level, our chapters are primarily located in coastal communities and have been directly impacted by the over 20 trail closures related to the recent decisions legal opinion that lead to these trail closures, many of which impacts the public right to beach access and our public lands. Access is a universal right and necessary for the public's enjoyment of the beach and our public lands. As a key initiative of our organization, Surfrider Foundation has litigated the public's access rights within a number of states, including most recently here in Coos Bay, Oregon; and as such, we've built an extensive legal issues committee and national resources to support recreational immunity and the prescriptive rights of the public. We hope that we may be included in future workgroup deliberations to arrive at a permanent and meaningful solution for Oregonians.

SB 1576 is an important band aid for the interim to address trail closures related to the recreational immunity finding for this summer. Coastal tourism and access to Oregon's beaches represent an over \$800 million economy but access to our beaches and public coastal outdoor special places is also vital for our public health and well-being. A recent assessment of Oregon coastal community well-being (Lindberg et. al, 2019) reinforces this important element of human health and community resilience. This temporary fix in SB 1576 may indeed support both the well-being and community resilience far beyond the impacts to our economy which certainly must be addressed as soon as possible.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony and we hope we can be further included in a longer term more permanent solution for Oregon's access to our outdoor spaces.

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