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On Behalf Of:  
Committee:                                 House Committee On Judiciary  
Measure:                                    SB1576

Public trail access in Oregon could be severely curtailed this year and perhaps every other year going forward as the result of a lawsuit filed by a person who slipped and fell on a public bridge

I support Senate Bill 1576A. I would restore recreational immunity protections for public and private land open for recreational opportunities.

The Oregon Public Use of Lands Act encourages public and private landowners to make their land available to the public for recreation by providing landowners immunity from liability. However, the recent Oregon Court of Appeals decision undermined the immunity guaranteed in the Act, which would result in a severe reduction of land available for Oregonians to enjoy.

What do our communities look like when we close trails? I have been using public trails in Benton County several a week, every week since I moved here in 1985. I can't count the times I've fallen and hurt myself. I have a new hip as a result of one fall. I have permanent pain in my left shoulder because of another fall. I have a new bike because of another fall. I know dozens of people who have fallen and injured themselves on public trails.

but not one of us would even consider sueing the city or county or state for any of those injuries because of what it might mean for curtailing our continued use of those trails let alone the continued use of those trails by everyone in the future.

It's almost unthinkable, yet obviously not totally unthinkable, that a single person could be so selfish as to think it her right to move about in public in a "cuccoon" of safety where her every movement would be managed to the public and private authorities to preclude the possibility that she might be injured and if not that she would have the right to sue.

Where will Oregonians recreate if the public lands are closed down because one woman fell on one bridge on one day in her life and decided to sue?

Please support SB 1576