



State
Forests
TRUST
of Oregon

Formerly Tillamook Forest Heritage Trust

February 17, 2025

Dear Chair Prozanski, Vice-Chair Thatcher, and Members of the Committee,

I am submitting this testimony on behalf of the State Forests Trust of Oregon, a nonprofit organization dedicated to connecting people to the wonders of Oregon state forests. For 25 years, we have worked to build and maintain trails, support recreation and learning opportunities, and foster stewardship of state forests managed by the Oregon Department of Forestry.

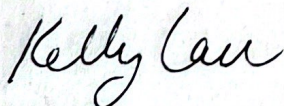
Oregon state forests provide essential outdoor spaces for residents and visitors each year. These lands serve as a place for hiking, biking, horseback riding, off-highway vehicle use, foraging, hunting, fishing, learning, community service and countless other recreational activities. Ensuring continued access to these trails is critical to public health, local economies, and Oregon's outdoor heritage. Oregon's economy and Oregonian's quality of life depend upon the reliable protection a clear and enduring recreation immunity statute can provide.

We strongly support what SB 179 can become and urge the effort forward to provide lasting recreational immunity protection for landowners who allow outdoor recreation. Without these protections, the risk of liability will lead to the closure of trails, campgrounds, and day-use areas, limiting access for Oregonians who cherish them.

Additionally, we urge the committee to remove the sunset provision from the current law, ensuring these protections remain permanent. It is also essential to expand the language in the statute's "purposes" to include "to traverse the land in order to pursue" rather than limiting the list of protected activities by adding to specific examples like walking, biking, or running in order to deal with the problem of intent. A more inclusive approach will better reflect the increasingly diverse ways people explore and enjoy Oregon state forests and align with the intent. Without immunity that covers crossing the land (that is not a roadway, also that is not merely adjacent land) these opportunities will continue to be at risk.

By passing a sound, clear and coherent recreation immunity law SB 179, we can ensure that Oregon state forests can continue to provide social value by fueling resilient communities through recreation, connection, and shared appreciation—today and for future generations.

Thank you for your time and consideration.



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Executive Director

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