



Nick Gibson

Owner, Trans-Cascadia Excursions

47419 Westoak Road

Westfir, Oregon 97492

February 18, 2025

Dear Chair Nguyen, Vice Chairs Diehl and Isadore, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Nick Gibson, and I am the owner and operator of Trans-Cascadia Excursions, a mountain bike outfitter and guide company based in the Willamette National Forest. Our business relies on Oregon's trail networks and public lands to provide exceptional outdoor experiences for residents and visitors alike.

I am writing in strong support of HB 3140, which addresses a critical liability issue impacting businesses like mine and many others in Oregon's outdoor recreation industry. The current liability landscape creates significant uncertainty for land managers, private landowners, and outdoor service providers like myself, leading to increased insurance costs and, in some cases, reduced access to trails and public lands.

For my business, these liability concerns have led to challenges securing appropriate insurance coverage at a reasonable cost. The rising premiums and policy limitations strain small businesses like mine, which depend on accessible trails to survive. Beyond financial burdens, the uncertainty around liability discourages collaboration between outfitters, landowners, and public agencies—limiting the potential for expanding recreation opportunities in our state.

One of the fastest-growing opportunities for trail access is on private land, particularly private timber land. Across the Pacific Northwest, we have seen a significant increase in new trail development on private land, especially through land leases with private timber

companies. As it becomes increasingly difficult to build new trails and update our trail systems on federal lands, private land access for trail development is flourishing. However, without strong liability protections, these opportunities could be lost.

It is critical that we ensure private landowners have the protections they need to continue allowing public access for recreation. If these landowners face excessive liability risks, they may be forced to close trails or restrict access, ultimately hurting outdoor recreation businesses, local economies, and trail users alike. HB 3140 provides the necessary legal clarity and stability to support both private landowners and the outdoor industry.

Oregon's outdoor recreation economy is a major driver of tourism, business, and rural community development. I urge the committee to pass HB 3140 to provide much-needed liability protections that will ensure the long-term sustainability of trail access in our state.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Nick Gibson
Owner, Trans-Cascadia Excursions
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Westfir, Oregon 97492