

Submitter: Joe Waksmundski  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: Senate Committee On Judiciary  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB179

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

Hello, my name is Joe Waksmundski hailing from Eugene. I am writing to express my support for SB 179, to remove the current sunset to the law around recreational immunity. The litigious efforts of the few have already had profound consequences on the majority, with communities and private landowners having little choice but to close access to trails and public lands; because of frivolous lawsuits by those looking to profit off of community resources. In 2022 I had emergency open heart surgery, due to a genetic condition I was previously unaware of, while I was recuperating; during the depths of the COVID pandemic, it was the access to local trails and public spaces that helped bolster my spirits and allowed me to progress quickly in my recovery. I moved to Oregon in 2002 to take a job with the Northwest Youth Corps, over the 16 years I was with the organization I saw the positive effects that being in nature had on the lives of thousands of young men and women, many of whom were escaping less than ideal home lives or who were seeking job skills to better their lives or who just wanted to get outside. If municipalities are forced to shutter trails and public lands, it is not far-fetched to think that these lands will be ultimately sold to developers, and their access will be gone forever. Life has inherent risk and utilizing our public lands should as well, I urge you to pass SB 179 and help preserve access to public lands here in Oregon.

Thank you for your time and consideration.  
Joe Waksmundski