

February 18, 2025

Re: Support for HB3140

Dear Chair Ngyuen, Vice-Chair Diehl, Vice-Chair Isadore, and members of the House Committee on Economic Development, Small Business, and Trade:

I am concerned about the issue of liability for the recreation industry and support HB3140. My family is deeply involved with Oregon camps. These camps provide education, recreation, and leadership opportunities to students like my son. Camp experiences are key to my son's growth and development and important to how our family connects.

Outdoor recreation activities are inherently risky. I accept that as a parent and a regular outdoor recreationalist. I do not want that risk to be removed from outdoor activities nor do I expect that a recreation provider would or should attempt to eliminate the risk of experiencing nature. I want my son to wade through streams, climb over fallen trees, and trudge through sand. With these experiences, he will learn how to better navigate the world, outdoors and in.

There is extensive research about the benefits of children learning to navigate risks. For example, the National Association for the Education of Young Children states that the inherent risks involved in outdoor play are essential for children to develop physically, cognitively, socially, and emotionally. (Article linked below. Also included is the Children & Nature Network research digest about the benefits of risk-taking.) Navigating natural risks is one of the reasons people choose to recreate outdoors. It is good for us physically and mentally.

There is a difference between a risk and a hazard. An unattended hazard is negligence and should create liability. Inherent and natural risks should not. Putting an unfair liability burden on Oregon camps and other recreation providers for the risks inherent in nature will destroy their businesses.

Oregon camps employ thousands of workers across the state. Especially important, Oregon camps offer young people entry-level jobs to begin to build long-term careers. Camps also contribute important financial resources to rural communities. Camps are vital to the well-being of Oregonians. I support HB3140 because it is important to protect Oregon recreation businesses. Please join me in supporting this important bill.

Most Sincerely,



Kim Silva

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NAEYC article: <https://www.naeyc.org/resources/pubs/tyc/spring2023/risk-taking-outdoor-play>
C&NN digest: <https://www.childrenandnature.org/resources/research-digest-risk-taking-in-natural-environments/>