



February 18, 2025

Senate Committee on Judiciary
Oregon State Capitol, 900 Court Street NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

Re: SB 179 Relating to landowner immunity

Chair Prozanski and Members of the Committee:

The Travel Lane County Board of Directors is a 30-member board representing the interests of the hospitality industry in Lane County. In 2024, the board voted to support the temporary changes made to the landowner immunity laws by chapter 64, Oregon Laws 2024. The board supports Senate Bill 179 because making the temporary changes permanent will provide landowners the protection needed to keep Oregon's beautiful outdoor spaces open for residents and visitors to recreate.

Outdoor recreation plays a significant role in Lane County's 4,700 square miles of beautiful landscapes and throughout the rest of Oregon. Past court rulings effectively nullified Oregon liability and immunity protections, impacting the accessibility and affordability of recreation and fitness for people across our state. Oregon businesses now pay significantly more for liability insurance than other western states. As a result, recreation and fitness providers are forced to either increase consumer costs or eliminate recreation options. This will have a devastating effect on small businesses, rural communities and recreationists throughout the state. Without waiver and liability reform, Oregon risks losing the tremendous societal and economic benefits recreation and fitness provide.

Our region hosts a large number of cycling, running, trail and sports events that require liability waivers to be signed by participants. The potential for an event not occurring increases as event expenses rise or the liability risk becomes too high for the event organizer. It would be difficult to quantify the potential number of lost room nights at this time, however, visitor experience is affected when outdoor recreation opportunities become less available or are priced so high that they become inaccessible. Should there be fewer opportunities for visitors to consider, extending a stay becomes less likely. Our small businesses face enormous economic and, for some, environmental challenges. Having a sound, clear and coherent recreation immunity law



provides a more level playing field for all Oregon entities who provide recreation opportunities.

Travel Lane County supports and encourages the passage of Senate Bill 179. Thank you for your service to Oregon.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andy Vobora". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping tail on the letter "a" at the end.

Andy Vobora
Vice President of Stakeholder Relations
Travel Lane County