

February 16, 2025

House Committee on Economic Development, Small Business, and Trade
900 Court Street NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

RE: Strong Support for HB 3140 – Protecting Oregon’s Outdoor Recreation Industry

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

Since 1963, Oregon Outfitters and Guides Association (OOGA) has served outfitters and guides registered and operating in Oregon. We advocate for the preservation, growth and strength of the Oregon guiding and outfitting industry. Our industry provides sustainable jobs, enhances rural economies, and relies on the quality and availability of Oregon’s diverse landscapes and waterways.

OOGA strongly supports House Bill 3140, which establishes a more balanced approach to liability protections for Oregon’s outdoor recreation businesses. Recent court rulings have weakened the enforceability of liability waivers, which has led to rising insurance costs and increased legal risks for guides, outfitters, nonprofits, volunteer stewardship crews, recreation providers, and other outdoor businesses. Without clear protections, these small businesses and organizations face escalating insurance costs that far outpace inflation. For a number of small businesses in our industry it is threatening their ability to continue to operate.

Oregon’s outfitting and guiding industry is comprised of small businesses led by highly skilled outdoor recreation professionals who prioritize safety and effectively manage risk in wild, remote and dynamic environments. While we do not support legislation that grants blanket immunity, we strongly advocate for common-sense, balanced approaches to managing risk and liability in the outdoor recreation industry. The current regulatory framework does not benefit consumers, insurance providers nor business, it does however tip the scales in favor of litigators who stand to profit from the current legal environment.

Every other western state upholds liability waivers for ordinary negligence, ensuring that customers can pursue claims against recreation or fitness operators when justified. House Bill 3140 would bring Oregon in line with these states by clarifying the enforceability of liability waivers while preserving essential consumer protections. This legislation ensures that outfitters, guides, and other recreation businesses can compete fairly with their counterparts in neighboring states.

We urge lawmakers to pass this bill to protect small businesses, provide equitable and affordable access to the outdoors, and uphold Oregon’s reputation as a premier destination for recreation and tourism.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Priscilla Macy-Cruser'.

Priscilla Macy-Cruser
Oregon Outfitters & Guides Association