

**Testimony in Support of SB 179**  
**Representative Bobby Levy, House District 58**

Please support Senate Bill 179.

This legislation ensures that landowners who allow public access to their property for recreation and other outdoor activities continue to receive the liability protections necessary to keep these spaces open and accessible.

Oregon has a strong tradition of outdoor recreation, from hiking and fishing to hunting and camping. Many of these opportunities exist because private landowners voluntarily open their lands to the public. In 2024, the legislature recognized the importance of strengthening liability protections for landowners who make their land available for public use. SB 179 makes those temporary provisions permanent, maintaining the balance between public access and private property rights.

This legislation clarifies that landowners, nonprofits, and local governments that provide access to trails, unimproved rights of way, and other outdoor spaces are protected from negligence claims, except in cases of gross negligence or willful misconduct. By codifying these protections, SB 179 ensures that Oregonians will continue to have access to the outdoor spaces that define our state, while also giving landowners the confidence to keep their land open.

For rural communities, this is particularly critical. Outdoor recreation drives economic activity, fosters tourism, and enhances quality of life. Many landowners—especially those in agriculture and forestry—wish to allow access but fear legal repercussions. This bill reassures them that they can continue to be good stewards and partners in expanding outdoor opportunities.

I urge the committee to pass SB 179 to provide certainty and security for our landowners while keeping Oregon's great outdoors accessible to all. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,  
Bobby Levy