

Submitter: Katelyn Nixon

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Judiciary

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB179

Dear Chair Kropf, Vice-Chairs Chotzen and Wallan, and members of the committee,

I'm writing today as someone deeply connected to Oregon's trails—not just as an outdoor enthusiast, but as a youth educator, outdoor guide, and community member who has seen firsthand the value these spaces bring to people of all ages and backgrounds.

Our trails are vital. They support our physical and mental well-being, build community, offer educational opportunities, and serve as a gateway to fostering environmental stewardship. Ensuring access to these trails is essential—not just for recreation, but for connection.

I strongly support passing lasting recreational immunity protections to keep Oregon's trails open. The current bill is a big step in the right direction, particularly in removing the sunset clause—that's critical to maintaining consistency and clarity. Thank you for including that.

That said, I urge you to strengthen the bill further by:

Extending the increased level of immunity in Section 1 to private landowners who open their land to the public free of charge. These generous stewards are a key part of our outdoor access network.

More clearly protecting multi-use trails that serve both recreational and transportation purposes. The law should reflect the reality that these trails are used by diverse communities for various reasons, and subjective intent shouldn't jeopardize access or protections.

Thank you for considering this input and for your ongoing work to keep Oregon's trails accessible, safe, and open to all.

Warmly,
Katelyn Nixon