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April 22, 2025

House Committee on Judiciary
Representative Jason Kropf, Chair
Representative Willy Chotzen, Vice-Chair
Representative Kim Wallan, Vice-Chair
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

Re: SB 179, Relating to landowner immunity
Favorable

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

Rails to Trails Conservancy is the nation's leading trails organization, building a nation connected by trails. RTC reimagines public spaces to create safe ways for everyone to walk, bike and be active outdoors. RTC has a Western Regional Office whose territory includes Oregon.

Recreational immunity is vital for trails, so public and private landowners feel safe providing access to their land – for uses such as multiuse trails, serving recreational and active transportation purposes – without fear of lawsuit. RTC supports Senate Bill 179 because enshrining the recreational immunity law permanently in statute, rather than as a temporary law with a sunset clause, is critical.

RTC supports the bill, as passed by the Senate, but hopes the Oregon Legislature will further strength Oregon's recreation immunity law in the current or future sessions in the following ways:

- Extend the increased level of immunity in Section 1 of the bill to private landowners who open their land to the public free of charge
- Clarify more strongly that trails that serve dual purpose as both recreation and transportation facilities are covered under the law; address the problem of subjective intent
- Include broader language like "conveyance" rather than the specific trail activities like walking, biking, and running currently spelled out in the "includes but is not limited to" recreational activities list in Section 2(5).

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Andrew Dupuy
Director of State-level Policy

Iman Sylvain
Western Regional Director

Kayla Walker
Major Gifts Officer
Milwaukie, Oregon