

4/24/2025

Representative Jason Kropf, Chair
House Committee on Judiciary
Oregon State Capitol
Salem, Oregon 97301

Dear Chair Kropf, Vice-Chairs Wallan and Chotzen, and Members of the Committee,

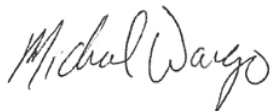
As Executive Director for Willamalane, I am writing to express our strong support for SB 179A, which would make permanent the temporary amendments to Oregon's recreational immunity statute. This bill is critical to ensuring that public landowners like Willamalane can continue to provide open access to recreational spaces without the risk of costly litigation.

As Springfield's primary provider of parks and recreational trails, we know that our community can only thrive if we offer safe, accessible, and well-maintained public spaces. These trails provide avenues for healthy recreation and have substantial public health benefits. Recreational immunity is a vital protection that allows us to keep our parks, trails, and natural areas open for public use. Without this safeguard, the financial risk of legal claims is so significant that it could force agencies like ours to restrict or close access to cherished outdoor spaces. At Willamalane, that includes trails like Thurston Hills Natural Area, Dorris Ranch, Clearwater Park, and many other significant recreation destinations in our community.

SB 179A protects landowners who make their land available for recreation from undue liability. This strengthens our commitment to outdoor access and the well-being of everyone we serve. Making these protections permanent will provide stability for special districts like Willamalane and everyone we serve.

We urge you to vote in favor SB 179A to protect the future of Oregon's parks and recreational spaces. Thank you for your dedication to supporting parks, recreation, and outdoor trail access for our communities.

Sincerely,



Michael Wargo, Executive Director
Willamalane Park and Recreation District
michaelw@willamalane.org