



Representative Kropf, Chair
Representative Chotzen, Vice-Chair
Representative Wallan, Vice-Chair
House Committee on Judiciary
900 Court Se. NE Salem, OR 97301

April 25, 2025

Chair Kropf, Vice-Chairs Chotzen and Wallan, and Members of the House Committee on Judiciary:

On behalf of the Washington County Department of Land Use & Transportation (LUT), I write in strong support of Senate Bill 179, which would remove the sunset provisions from Oregon's current recreational immunity law.

As a local transportation and land use agency, LUT plays a key role in planning, building, and maintaining public infrastructure – including multi-use trails and corridors that serve both recreational and transportation purposes. Recreational immunity laws are essential to our ability to provide safe, publicly accessible spaces while managing liability risks responsibly.

In 2024, the Legislature took an important step to clarify that recreational immunity extends to walking, running, and bicycling on improve and unimproved trails. SB 179 will make those clarifications permanent, ensuring that local governments and partners can continue to offer these valued facilities without fear of costly litigation.

We also encourage the committee to consider clarifying that trails serving both recreational and transportation functions are covered under the law, to avoid ambiguity around user intent. Additionally, we support increased immunity protections for private landowners who open their land to the public to enjoy. Access to nature and outdoor recreation are crucial part of Oregon's heritage and should be maintained for future generations.

These updates will provide greater certainty and ensure continued access to trails that connect neighborhoods, schools, parks, and key destinations across our region.

We thank you for your consideration and urge your support of SB 179 to help keep Oregon's trail system open, safe, and accessible.

Sincerely,

Stephen Roberts, Director
Department of Land Use
& Transportation

Laurel Brown, Director
Washington County Facilities,
Fleet & Parks Department