

June 10, 2025

Support for SB 1196-1: Recreational Liability Balance



**TRAILKEEPERS
OF OREGON**

Dear Chair Meek and Members of the Committee,

Trailkeepers of Oregon (TKO) is a statewide nonprofit dedicated to protecting and enhancing the Oregon hiking experience through trail stewardship, advocacy, outreach, and education. Each year, our volunteers contribute thousands of hours to maintain, restore, and build trails as well as ensure visitors feel safe and welcome across the state—service that is essential to ensuring safe and equitable access to Oregon's public lands.

We write today in support of SB 1196 with the -1 amendment, which aims to modernize Oregon's recreational liability laws and bring them into better alignment with those of our neighboring states. This balanced approach would provide greater clarity and consistency around the use of liability waivers, a tool that is essential to the continued work of organizations like ours.

Currently, the ambiguity and higher insurance costs associated with Oregon's liability environment are making it increasingly difficult for nonprofits and community-based recreation providers to operate. Community volunteers are being asked to step up for public lands like never before. This impacts not only our ability to deliver hands-on trail stewardship programs, but also limits opportunities for Oregonians to safely experience and give back to the outdoors.

The passage of SB 1196-1 will help ensure that trail stewardship, guided recreation, and outdoor education programs remain affordable, accessible, and legally sustainable across Oregon. We urge your support for this important step forward.

Thank you for your leadership and consideration.

Sincerely,

Steve Kruger
TKO Executive Director