



11675 SW Hazelbrook Road | Tualatin, OR | 97062 | (503) 218 2580 | [tualatinriverkeepers.org](http://tualatinriverkeepers.org) | [info@tualatinriverkeepers.org](mailto:info@tualatinriverkeepers.org)

June 13, 2025

Senate Committee on Finance and Revenue Oregon  
State Capitol  
900 Court Street NE Room 160  
Salem, Oregon 97301

**Re: SB 1196-1 Recreational Liability Reform**

Dear Chair Meek, Vice-Chair McLane, and members of the Senate Committee on Finance and Revenue,

I am submitting this testimony on behalf of Tualatin Riverkeepers (TRK) and our 300 members and hundreds of volunteers. TRK submits this testimony to voice our strong support for SB 1196-1.

Tualatin Riverkeepers protects, restores and expands access to the Tualatin River watershed through advocacy and fostering broad community engagement. We envision a thriving Tualatin River watershed sustained by an engaged community who enjoys all of the benefits a healthy river system has to offer, including recreational opportunities.

We accomplish our mission through three primary programs: Advocacy, River Experiences, and Restoration. Our River Experiences program is the primary avenue through which the community engages with TRK. We rent paddle craft at Cook Park in Tigard and Rood Bridge Park in Hillsboro throughout the summer months, and host more than 2,000 paddlers annually. Our guided paddle trips focus on engaging residents of the watershed who are unlikely to have experienced the river prior to coming out with us.

Under our Restoration program, TRK partners with land management agencies throughout the watershed, hosting dozens of habitat restoration projects annually. We engage in restoration work not only to remove invasive species and plant native species, but to engage both young people and organizations that serve community members who will be most impacted by our changing climate.

TRK believes that one of the best ways for our community to become civically engaged is to get outside and enjoy the river that flows right through our backyard. Facilitating on-the-water experiences creates opportunities for new experiences, empowers environmental stewardship, and develops community interest in our work. SB 1196-1 ensures our recreation and restoration programs remain affordable, accessible, and legally sustainable across the watershed.

The survival of these programs and TRK's work in our community depends on sensible reform of Oregon's liability waiver system. Without this reform, insurance costs will become untenable and TRK and other outdoor recreation and stewardship organizations will be forced to either increase their costs to participants or eliminate certain recreation and volunteer opportunities altogether.

As our fellow waterkeepers, Willamette Riverkeepers, stated in their testimony, SB1196 provides a balanced, reasonable framework that restores enforceable waivers while upholding operator responsibility. It also initiates a long-overdue study into sustainable funding for outdoor

recreation—a necessary step for every community that depends on accessible parks and river access points, and a clean and healthy Tualatin River watershed.

Thank you,

Kelsey Shaw Nakama  
Policy & Advocacy Director  
Tualatin Riverkeepers