

February 8<sup>th</sup>, 2026  
In SUPPORT of SB 1593 (ORCA)

Dear Chair Meek, Vice-Chair Drazan and members of the Committee,

My name is Christian Bennett, and I am a lifelong skier, the current President of Schnee Vogeli Ski Club, and an avid outdoorsman enjoying the natural wonders our state offers. Schnee Vogeli's mission since 1942 has been to develop, foster and promote the sport of skiing through social and competitive events locally and beyond. From the beginning, the through line in our clubs lineage has been competitive skiing on Mountain Hood, Ski Racing.

In the last decade, and particularly in the last two or three seasons, maintaining our ski program has been increasing difficult and expensive. While there are factors at play outside of Liability that influence this, a major point of contention has been Liability coverage. Our Club maintains liability coverage for events we host, and in 2025 alone we saw a 50% increase in insurance premiums. We have seen some of the resorts we work with consider increased liability coverage requirements from us and in turn charge a significantly higher fee for hill space, some of which can directly be tied to their increased liability exposure and insurance expenses.

Outside of the club's program, we are starting to see events canceled in the Mountain Hood community for lack of liability coverage. Last season the Ninety-Pound Rucksack Challenge's Oregon event, which is part of a nation wide commemorative uphill ski event remembering the 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division's assault on Riva Ridge in World War II, was canceled at the last minute due to insurance issues. And as noted in the testimony from Dave Winterling of Mountain Hood Ski Patrol, the annual Ski the Glade fundraiser is currently in danger of cancellation again due to insurance coverage.

Without legislative action, all signs point towards this trend continuing, with increasing pressure on the community at large resulting in recreation in and around Oregon's nature treasures becoming inaccessible for most and expressive for the rest.

SB 1593 is a reasonable, measured approach to bridge this gap. With SB 1593 Oregon would join the rest of our peer states (such as California and Washington) in allowing recreational providers to require a waiver against Ordinary Negligence while preserving the public's ability to seek judgments against greater than Ordinary Negligence. SB 1593 goes beyond just the major Ski Resorts and provides this relief for all Oregonians gathering together and engaging in recreation, athletics, and more.

I respectfully ask that you support SB 1593.

Sincerely,  
Christian Bennett  
President  
Schnee Vogeli Ski Club

