

Submitter: Patrice Godfrey
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Commerce and General Government
Measure, Appointment or SB1593
Topic:

Chair, Vice-Chairs, and Members of the Committee,
Oregon is currently the only western state that does not recognize liability waivers as an admissible legal defense. This policy environment is creating significant challenges for recreation-based businesses across the state, including outfitters, guides, event operators, and other recreation providers.

As a result, many businesses are experiencing sharply rising insurance premiums, reduced coverage options, or the loss of insurance altogether. These increased costs strain small businesses and, in some cases, have forced operators to reduce services or close entirely. Ultimately, these costs are passed on to consumers, making recreational opportunities more expensive and less accessible for families and visitors.

Outdoor and recreational activities are a key component of Oregon's tourism economy and quality of life. Rising liability exposure and operating costs threaten the affordability of recreational experiences, from weekend getaways to family-friendly activities, and risk pricing out everyday Oregonians and visitors alike. This trend undermines both local businesses and the broader visitor economy that communities rely on.

Oregon offers a diverse range of recreational opportunities that attract residents and visitors year-round. Aligning Oregon's liability framework with other western states would help stabilize insurance markets, support small recreation businesses, and preserve access to safe, affordable recreational experiences for families.

Respectfully,
Patrice Godfrey