

Letter to the Senate Committee on Commerce and General Government

Re: Support for SB1593

From: Hood River Outrigger Canoe Club (HROCC) Board of Directors
PO 1313 | Hood River, OR | 97031

February 9, 2026

This letter is strongly in support of Senate Bill 1593, and in turn the ORCA2026 act, which offers a comprehensive solution for the liability issues affecting small businesses and nonprofits throughout Oregon.

HROCC is a 14-year-old non-profit club with over a hundred members, and through our community outreach programs interacts with 100s more in our community. Our club provides recreation and competitive paddling activities and instruction on water safety and awareness.

Following are some of the reasons for our support of SB1593:

- Local communities rely on commerce associated with the recreation and health and fitness industries to strengthen their economies, create jobs and enhance their quality of life.
- Every other western state enforces recreational liability waivers for ordinary negligence, creating unique challenges and competitive disadvantages for Oregon's recreation and health and fitness providers.
- Written recreational liability waivers are a proven, effective and widely accepted contractual tool for educating the public on the inherent risks of participating in recreation and health and fitness activities and for balancing the responsibilities of participants in inherently risky activities with the responsibilities of recreation and health and fitness providers.
- In Oregon's current legal liability environment there has been a withdrawal of insurance carriers and increased costs and risks for recreation and health and fitness providers. These increased costs disproportionately impact small business and nonprofit providers, low-income populations and underserved communities.
- SB1593 covers all types of recreational businesses, clubs and sports organizations and will restore the intention of liability waivers to release the operator from claims for 'ordinary' liability.

Passing SB1593 will help continue the strong and vibrant recreational industry and clubs that Oregon residents expect, and that drives so much tourism to our state.

Thank you for your consideration,

Hood River Outrigger Canoe Club Board of Directors

Suz Burd, President Joni Anderson, Secretary Cathy Higgins, Treasurer

David Murrel, Equipment Manager Jane Raymond, Member at Large

Mellisa McElderry, Race Team Director Kateri Osborn-Lohr, Community Outreach Manager