

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

I am writing in support of SB 1593, with a strong request that it be amended to allow parents or legal guardians to sign recreational liability waivers for minors. I manage a community-based organization for LGBTQIA+ Oregon-based working-class artists. Some of our programming includes outdoor programs, volunteer opportunities, stewardship projects, and recreation for those we serve. These events help people connect to the land, stay healthy, and care for the places we all depend on. Many of our small local businesses are struggling with rising insurance costs and legal risk that make it harder to keep these programs going.

SB 1593 is a common sense step. It makes recreational liability waivers clearer and more enforceable, which helps organizations manage risk while still running safe, well supervised programs. We need a workable legal framework so they can keep offering programs instead of shutting them down out of fear of lawsuits or insurance costs.

Right now, the bill does not cover youth under 18. That is a serious problem because many outdoor, volunteer, and stewardship programs are designed specifically for kids and families. If parents cannot sign waivers for their children, a huge number of programs will still be left in legal limbo.

Parents already make informed decisions every day about their kids participating in sports, camps, field trips, and outdoor activities. Allowing parents or legal guardians to sign waivers for minors reflects that reality and keeps these programs accessible to families across Oregon.

This bill, with that fix, would help protect community organizations, support outdoor access, and make it easier for people of all ages to participate in meaningful, healthy activities outside.