

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

I am the owner of Tree Climbing at Silver Falls, a tour operator and special use permit with the Oregon Parks operator. We provide climbing tours up giant trees! I wanted to reach out because it's important that SB 1593 (and its identical House companion HB 4071) pass in some form. These bills would provide our business with much-needed liability protections and help ensure continued access to insurance options so we can keep operating.

We are one of the most unique tour operators in the nation and also one of the highest-rated. It would be a major loss for our community if we were forced to stop offering these tours because we lose access to insurance or affordable insurance.

Right now, the insurance landscape for specialty unique tour operators like us is incredibly expensive, and we may lose the last known company willing to provide general commercial liability coverage for our tours. We have been told by past insurance companies that they can not provide us quotes anymore for our tours in Oregon, because of the lack of legal protections and waiver enforceability in Oregon for tour operators. As of now we are down to a single insurance company that we know of that will provide us with commercial general liability insurance for our tours.

Additionally, Oregon State Parks staff has hinted they may begin requiring increased liability coverage that currently does not exist for our type of operation. We are also concerned that without these liability protections, Oregon State Parks could choose lose their businesses that provide concessions and special user permit operations.

Because of this, I think 1593 is important to be passed and for the general outdoor rec businesses of Oregon.

Leo Fischer
Owner of Tree Climbing at Silver Falls