

Submitter: Matthew Rea
On Behalf Of: Mt. Hood Ski Patrol
Committee: House Committee On Rules
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1517

Dear Chair Bowman, Vice-Chairs Elmer and Pham, and members of the Committee,

I am a 35-year volunteer member of the Mt. Hood Ski Patrol with experience working at all the ski resorts on Mt. Hood, as well as being a lifelong recreational skier in Oregon. In my role as a patroller it is my honor to provide emergency first aid and other public safety support to the citizens of Oregon and many visitors from elsewhere participating in skiing, snowboarding and other outdoor activities on the slopes of Mt. Hood. I know the joy that we all derive from participating in exhilarating and sometimes risky outdoor sports. I also know firsthand the steps that our ski resorts go to to try to manage for risk. They do everything they can to minimize risk to the public while still allowing us to enjoy our sports.

I clearly understand that for land steward agencies and organizations, recreation providers and users, and nonprofit advocates, recreational liability protections are vital to the health and fitness of Oregonians. We need liability waiver reform that aligns Oregon's laws with those of other states, reducing costs and creating greater certainty for small organizations. That in turn enables our many outdoor recreation organizations to continue protecting access and opportunities for recreation and stewardship activities alike.

In this session, the Protect Oregon Recreation coalition has consistently shared support for the policy language in SB 1593A as a workable solution that would meet the needs of the outdoor recreation community.

SB 1517A, as passed by the -7 will not provide our organizations with greater certainty or reduce our insurance costs. There is no protection for stewardship activities and the many explicit exceptions to what can be included in waivers would put the ski areas at even greater risk than the already untenable status quo.

However, we could support the moving of SB 1517A forward with the -A11 or -A15 amendments. The -A11 amendment contains the language we've been asking for all along, and we're also willing to trade the certainties of SB 1593A for the broad applicability of -A15 if that is the legislature's provided route toward a compromise.

Signed,

Matthew T. Rea
5952 SE 19th Ave.

Portland, OR 97202