



March 1, 2026

House Rules Committee
900 Court St. NE, H-295
Salem, OR 97301

RE: City of Tigard Support for SB 1517A with the -A11 or -A15 Amendments

Chair Bowman, Vice-Chairs Elmer and Pham, and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the City of Tigard, I am writing to express our support for SB 1517A only if the -A11 or -A15 amendments are adopted. These amendments are necessary to provide clear, workable protections for local governments that offer recreational programs to the public.

Cities like Tigard provide a wide range of recreational opportunities intended to enrich the lives of residents and visitors. These include community events, youth and adult recreation programs, outdoor activities, fun runs, festivals, and educational programs. While these activities are generally safe, many involve inherent risks that participants should understand before choosing to take part.

To manage those risks responsibly, cities use recreation liability waivers that are reviewed and signed by participants. These waivers are not simply legal documents; they create an opportunity for staff to communicate clearly about risks, expectations, and safety protocols. This helps participants make informed decisions and contributes to safer experiences overall.

However, the Oregon Supreme Court's *Bagley* decision in 2014 significantly limited the effectiveness of liability waivers, leading to increased uncertainty and substantially higher insurance costs for cities and recreation providers. Over the past decade, this has placed pressure on local governments' ability to continue offering certain programs and has put Oregon communities at a disadvantage compared with other states where waivers are recognized.

Codifying the enforceability of recreational liability waivers would provide Tigard with confidence that we can continue offering valuable programs without the fear of unreasonable liability exposure. We believe SB 1517A, with the -A11 or -A15 amendments, strikes an appropriate balance by allowing participants to acknowledge risks while preserving accountability for negligence and unsafe practices.

For these reasons, **Tigard supports SB 1517A only if the -A11 or -A15 amendments are adopted.**

Thank you for your consideration and for your work on this important issue.

Sincerely,

Yi-Kang Hu, Mayor
City of Tigard