

Submitter: Lauren Lake

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Rules

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1517

My name is Lauren Lake, and I am a dedicated trail maintenance volunteer. I'm writing to you today because the future of Oregon's outdoor spaces depends not just on funding, but on the people willing to pick up a pulaski or a crosscut saw to keep our paths clear.

I strongly urge you to move SB 1517 forward only with the -A11 or -A15 amendments.

Why This Matters on the Trail:

As a volunteer, I'm not just a hiker; I'm a steward. We take on the "dirty work" of clearing storm damage, fixing drainage, and ensuring trails remain safe for the public. However, the current liability landscape creates a chilling effect on the organizations that coordinate our work.

- Protecting the Partners: Organizations that manage us shouldn't have to risk their entire existence to let us fix a bridge or clear a switchback.
- The Right Balance: The -A11 and -A15 amendments strike the perfect chord. They provide the necessary "breathing room" for stewardship groups to operate while rightly maintaining accountability for gross negligence or intentional harm.
- Sustainability: Without these clear, workable protections, the risk of managing volunteers may become too high for many nonprofits. If they step back, our trail systems—and the rural economies that rely on them—will suffer.

We want to keep Oregon's outdoors accessible and safe. To do that, we need a legal framework that recognizes the unique value and inherent risks of stewardship. Please support SB 1517 with the -A11 or -A15 amendments to ensure that volunteers like me can keep working for the state we love.