



February 28, 2026

Chair Bowman, Vice Chairs Elmer and Pham, and members of House Rules Committee:

We write to you as nonprofit land stewards, conservationists, and recreation providers from across Oregon to share our serious concerns with SB 1517A as written, and reiterate our unanimous support for the protections provided under SB 1593A as written.

On February 9, a coalition of nearly 100 recreation, conservation, and stewardship advocates came to Salem to meet with lawmakers and discuss the dire need for recreational liability waiver reform. And while we applauded SB1593A advancing out of committee on a unanimous 5-0 vote, SB 1517A threatens the viability of our work. Oregon's liability policies endanger recreation and volunteer land stewardship in Oregon and drive business to our neighboring states, which all have sensible recreation liability laws.

We are particularly concerned with the loss of recreational insurance providers. Over the last decade, we have seen our insurance premiums significantly increase and our insurance options dwindle. Insuring recreation and stewardship activities is inherently complex and Oregon's lack of recreation liability laws severely hinders insurers ability to provide liability protection. SB 1517A will only exacerbate these issues.

While we strongly support efforts to improve recreational liability laws in Oregon, the current version of SB 1517 contains ambiguities and exceptions that create uncertainty and represent a step backward in the effort to protect recreation providers and the communities we serve. **We respectfully oppose SB 1517A as written.**

As noted, our organizations have been steadfast and unambiguous in our support of SB 1593 and the protections it provides. With respect to SB 1517, we feel that the framework reflected in the -A11 amendments to SB 1517 achieves the protections we've supported in SB 1593, and does so in a clear manner. **We support adoption of the amendments under -A11.**

We also recognize the determined work that has gone into seeking compromise on this issue, and we would therefore agree to support the -A15 amendments. While SB 1517-A15 would not include every preferred protection, we recognize the critical need to move the policy forward and provide broader applicability of waivers and greater certainty for nonprofit recreation and stewardship organizations, and the tens of thousands of participants and volunteers who participate with us annually.

We need an effective fix to recreation liability waivers now to preserve our state's world-class recreation industry and the vital stewardship work that tens of thousands of Oregonians volunteer for annually. The future of Oregon's outdoor recreation economy and conservation-focused land stewardship programs depend on comprehensive recreation liability waiver reform.