

Submitter: Margaret VanPatten  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: House Committee On Rules  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1517

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

My name is Margaret VanPatten, and I am the founder of She Moves Mountains LLC, an Oregon-based guiding business that helps women access the outdoors through climbing and guided adventure experiences. Like many small recreation businesses in this state, we work hard to operate responsibly, create meaningful jobs, and help people safely experience Oregon's outdoors.

I am writing because the current situation is not sustainable for small outfitters and guides. SB 1517-7, as written, would make the situation worse, not better. If it passes as is, businesses like mine will be left in an even more difficult position, and the uncertainty we are already dealing with will continue to threaten our ability to survive.

For outfitters and guides to keep operating, the Legislature needs to clearly declare that liability waivers are enforceable as a matter of public policy. That is the big issue, and it needs to be addressed this session.

We are not asking for a free pass, and we are not asking to avoid accountability. We are asking for the same balanced, common-sense framework used in other states: one that recognizes there are inherent risks in outdoor recreation, while still preserving a path to the courts when appropriate.

This has been an incredibly frustrating process for small businesses that are simply trying to survive, employ people, and get Oregonians outside. We want to keep doing that work. We want to keep serving our communities. But we are running out of time, and if something meaningful does not happen this session, some outfitters and guides will not make it to next year.

Please help provide the clarity Oregon's recreation businesses urgently need and clearly declare that liability waivers are enforceable as a matter of public policy

Thank you for your leadership and your time.

Sincerely,  
Margaret (Lizzy) VanPatten  
Founder, She Moves Mountains