



City of Elgin

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March 2, 2026

Representative Ben Bowman, Chair
900 Court St. NE. H-295
Salem, OR 97301

RE: LOC Support for SB 1517A with the -A11 of -A15 Amendments

Chair Bowman, and members of the House Rules Committee

The City of Elgin represents 1,800 Oregonians in the heart of the Blue Mountains. The City of Elgin cherishes the opportunity to provide safe recreational opportunities for people who live in our community, and for those who travel to recreate in Oregon cities. Thank you for the opportunity to share our support for SB 1517A with the -A8 amendment.

- We offer and sponsor recreational opportunities and programs seeking to enrich the lives of those who live in Elgin, and who can safely participate. We maintain three parks, with a riverfront trail, boat launch, and recreational vehicle lodging.
- These are generally considered safe activities under normal circumstances but do carry an inherent element of risk that is important to identify with participants.
- To manage risk, cities utilize recreation liability waivers that are reviewed and signed by participants. Liability waivers present city employees with an opportunity to converse with participants about potential risks and talk about safety protocols that lead to successful excursions.
- Oregon's Supreme Court invalidated the use of liability waivers with the Bagley decision in 2014. Elgin parks, and the recreation industry have suffered extreme increases in insurance coverage driving this industry to the brink. It has been 12 years since the courts ruled, and it is time to fix the issue putting Oregon and Elgin at a competitive disadvantage with other states.
- Codifying the legitimacy of recreation liability waivers gives Elgin confidence we may continue offering recreation programs without the fear of unreasonable liability claims. We believe SB1517A with the -A11 or A-15 amendments provides the security that cities need to continue providing safe and fun opportunities to recreate across Oregon.

Thank you,

Alex McHaddad, City Administrator