



Oregon State Legislature

RE: Beaverton Area Chamber Testimony in Opposition to SB 1517; Support for SB 1593

Dear Chair Bowman, Vice-Chair Elmer, Vice-Chair Pham, and Members of the House Committee on Rules,

The Beaverton Area Chamber represents a broad cross-section of local employers—small businesses, growing enterprises, and major regional employers—supporting thousands of jobs across Washington County and the broader region. Our members span industries including recreation, hospitality, agritourism, fitness, and outdoor activities that contribute meaningfully to Oregon’s economy and quality of life.

We support a strong business climate and vibrant recreational opportunities; however, we oppose SB 1517 and urge consideration of SB 1593 as the more effective policy solution.

Recreational and fitness-related businesses depend on liability insurance to operate. Under current conditions, many Oregon businesses face higher liability insurance costs compared to neighboring states. These elevated premiums increase operating expenses, which can translate into higher prices for consumers, reduced service offerings, or in some cases, decisions not to expand or invest in Oregon.

Restoring the validity of liability waivers for ordinary negligence, as contemplated in SB 1593, would help bring Oregon into closer alignment with surrounding states. Greater clarity and enforceability in liability standards would provide predictability for insurers and businesses alike. This, in turn, could improve access to affordable coverage and support continued investment in Oregon’s recreational economy.

By contrast, SB 1517 contains ambiguous language and appears narrowly focused on specific recreational activities, without addressing broader industry needs. Our members are seeking clear, consistent, and enforceable standards that apply across the recreational sector—not limited or partial solutions that may create additional uncertainty.

Businesses engaged in outdoor recreation, agritourism (including winery and brewery tours), fitness centers, and other experiential activities play an important role in attracting visitors and enhancing Oregon’s competitiveness for tourism and investment. Aligning Oregon’s liability framework with regional standards would strengthen these sectors and support local economic growth.



BEAVERTON AREA
Chamber of CommerceSM

For these reasons, the Beaverton Area Chamber respectfully urges a “no” vote on SB 1517 and support for SB 1593.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,
Beaverton Area Chamber

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Alicia M. Bermes

Alicia M. Bermes

President and Ceo
Beaverton Area Chamber of Commerce