



Winding Waters River Expeditions

March 2, 2026

To House Rules Committee: Chair Bowman, Vice-Chairs Pham, Elmer, and Representatives Grayber, Kropf, Skarlantos, and Wallan

For the record my name is Robin Pace, I am the owner of Winding Waters River Expeditions based in Joseph. 2026 will mark my 14th season as a guide and my third season as an Outfitter. The business I purchased has been in operation since 2004. I employ 20 people and am one of the few if not only solo-female outfitters in the state. I operate trips with many Oregonians including veterans, indigenous youth, elementary schools and universities, the LGBTQIA community, and local non profits, as well as the general public.

I did not become an Outfitter with illusions of getting rich, just goals of making a living. Other outfitters have data for insurance trends over the last decade, but for me costs have always been high. I just didn't expect they would be so high I would forgo paying myself to ensure my guides and bills were. Have I found ways to cut costs? Absolutely, but it looks like packing one less bottle of ketchup on burger night, and becoming really skilled at repairing dry bags.

SB1517 has moved through a multitude of iterations, many which have failed to address what has been asked for by Oregon's recreation sector. The industry has consistently voiced its support for SB 1593 and I am grateful to Chair Meek, and all those responsible for moving it forward. The recreation industry as a whole including volunteer organizations, need the legislature to declare liability waivers enforceable as a matter of public policy. Language like SB1593 is what is needed. Clear, simple, tested and it works in every state around us. Waivers used to work in Oregon. Waivers need to work in Oregon again.

To conclude, this is my fourth time in the last month speaking on this issue. I am not a lawyer—I'm a river guide. I'm not licensed to argue out the precise language of bills, even so I'm capable of recognizing SB1517 would not supply what is needed. As a river guide I'm particularly adept at recognizing a "big fish" story when I hear one. Long, complicated, convoluted, and inflated to sound as though it would feed everyone in the room. When in reality it would only feed those who baited the hook.

Simply put, Oregon doesn't need a "big fish." Oregon needs liability waivers that work, like those designated in SB1593 or the -11 or -15 amendments to SB1517 and we need it now.

Thank you,

Robin Pace  
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Joseph, OR