

Submitter: Kimberly Myers  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: House Committee On Rules  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1517

Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Kim Myers, and I am with NW Wine Shuttle. We serve visitors and Oregonians who come to experience the beauty, agriculture, and outdoor culture that make our state special. Our business operates at the intersection of tourism, recreation, and small business — and we are deeply concerned about the growing instability caused by Oregon's current liability environment.

I am here in support of restoring clear, enforceable liability waivers as outlined in SB 1593.

Oregon's outdoor and recreation-based businesses — from fishing guides and rafting companies to equestrian outfitters and tour operators — operate in environments where inherent risks simply cannot be eliminated. Guests willingly choose to participate in these experiences because they value authenticity and adventure. A well-drafted liability waiver acknowledges those inherent risks while still holding businesses accountable for gross negligence or reckless conduct.

That balance is critical.

Recent court decisions have made liability waivers unreliable in Oregon. As a result, insurance costs have skyrocketed, coverage options have shrunk, and in some cases policies have become unavailable altogether. This is not a theoretical concern — it is already impacting businesses across the state.

Tourism and recreation are not luxuries in Oregon. They are economic lifelines for rural communities and small operators. When insurers pull out of the market or dramatically increase rates, small businesses do not have the margin to absorb those costs. Some are already questioning whether they can continue operating next season.

SB 1517-7, as currently written, does not provide the clarity the industry needs. In fact, many believe it could further complicate the legal landscape and increase uncertainty at a time when stability is desperately needed.

SB 1593 offers a common-sense solution. It restores Oregon to the balanced approach used by nearly every surrounding state — and one Oregon itself previously relied upon. It recognizes that inherent risks are part of recreational activities while

preserving the right to pursue claims in cases of gross negligence or misconduct.

We are not asking for immunity. We are asking for predictability.

Without legislative action this session, there is a real risk that some outfitters and recreation-based businesses will not survive into next year. That would mean fewer opportunities for visitors to experience Oregon, fewer jobs in rural communities, and long-term damage to a cornerstone of our state's economy.

I respectfully urge you to support SB 1593 and provide the clarity and stability that Oregon's small businesses urgently need.

Thank you for your leadership and consideration.

Sincerely,  
Kim Myers  
NW Wine Shuttle