



March 2, 2026

Chair Bowman, Vice Chair Elmer and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the City of Central Point, I am writing in opposition to SB 1517A unless it is amended by the -A11 or -A15 amendments. As written, SB 1517A would be unworkable for cities and organizations that provide indoor and outdoor recreation opportunities to our communities.

The City of Central Point provides a wide range of recreational opportunities, including youth sports leagues, fitness classes, community events, park amenities, and seasonal programming. Like many Oregon cities, we rely on liability waivers to manage the inherent risks associated with these activities while keeping programs accessible and affordable for families.

The presumed underlying goal of the bill, to clarify that releases for ordinary negligence during the act of performing a recreational activity are enforceable, is one we support. However, Section 1(3) of SB 1517A significantly narrows the bill's practical application and creates ambiguity and uncertainty about when a release is valid. As written, SB 1517A would become largely symbolic rather than a meaningful risk management tool.

For local governments, that uncertainty translates into increased exposure and potentially fewer recreational offerings for our communities. Cities operate on limited budgets and are already navigating escalating liability premiums. If releases cannot be relied upon in a predictable way, risk-averse decisions may follow, including scaling back high-value programming such as youth sports leagues, swim lessons, or specialized recreational classes.

While the -A11 amendment is the ideal solution to clarify SB 1517A and protect operators who offer recreational opportunities, the -A15 amendment moves the current draft in the right direction and addresses the majority of our concerns.

With the -A11 or -A15 amendment, SB 1517A has the potential to provide clarity for recreation providers and participants alike. As written, however, this legislation risks creating more confusion than certainty.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge you to adopt the -A11 or -A15 amendment to ensure the bill achieves its intended purpose without unintended consequences for Oregon's recreation providers.

Sincerely,

Chris Clayton
City Manager, City of Central Point