

Submitter: Joan Anderson
On Behalf Of: Hood River Outrigger Canoe Club
Committee: House Committee On Rules
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1517

I OPPOSE SB1517 A without either Amendment 11 or 15 as described in the Staff Measure Summary dated 3/2/26.

I am a Board Member of the Hood River Outrigger Canoe Club (hoodriveroutrigger.com), one of 20 Oregon outrigger canoe clubs that belong to the Pacific Northwest Outrigger Racing Clubs (pnworca.org). In 2025 HROCC had 94 Members (ages 25-83), seventy-two guests and provided water safety and on-the-water experiences to 152 youths and adults (ages 5-60 years old) through our community outreach program. Our outreach programs work with Hood River Valley Schools (8th Grade and School Administration), the nonprofit Viento y Agua and the Options School.

Outdoor recreation and exercise are important to our health and well-being. It is also important to understand the duties and responsibilities associated with outdoor recreation activities and working together as a group.

Our Club requires all participants (parents or guardians for minors) to sign liability waivers before engaging in a Club activity. Participants are required to wear personal floatation devices, receive water and boat safety information before, during and after being in the canoe. Safety is a primary concern of our club.

SB 1517A without amendments A11 or A15 does not adequately protect outdoor recreation and stewardship organizations and may increase risk exposure for nonprofits, small businesses, public agencies, and even volunteer board members. SB1517 A includes so many exceptions that it could make today's litigious climate even worse.

The multiple conditions and exceptions listed in SB1517 are intended to limit claims for ordinary negligence arising out of or resulting from participation in a sport, equipment and facility use, or volunteering to maintain facilities or places used for a recreational activity. If someone voluntarily participates in an activity it is reasonable that they accept the risks inherent associated with that activity.

I understand that it is a delicate balance to protect both the rights of individuals participating in outdoor recreation activities with inherent risks while, at the same time, protecting the rights of organizations and businesses to provide those opportunities so we can continue to encourage outdoor recreation in Oregon for our residents and guests.

Please move SB1517A to the House Rules Committee for hearing and work session so that the balanced and practical liability protections set forth in either A-11 or A-15 are included.

Respectfully,
Joni Anderson

Member and Secretary, Hood River Outrigger Canoe Club