

Dear Chair Bowman, Vice-Chairs Elmer and Pham, and members of the committee,

Recreational liability protections are critical to the economic and recreation industries financial viability, and the ability of Non-Profit organizations such as ours to lead volunteer river clean ups along the Deschutes Paddle Trail in an effort to maintain the health of our river ecosystem.

We need liability waiver reform that aligns Oregon's laws with other states, reducing costs and creating greater certainty for small organizations such as ours. That in turn allows us to continue protecting access and opportunity for recreation and stewardship activities alike.

We urge your support for the policy language in SB 1593 A as a workable solution that would meet the needs of most of the recreation industry and non-profit organizations.

SB 1517 A as currently written will not provide our organization nor our volunteer board officers with confidence against frivolous litigation or reduce our insurance costs. There is no protection for stewardship activities in the current language and the many explicit exceptions to what can be included in waivers would put us at even greater risk than the already untenable status quo.

However we would support moving SB 1517 forward with the -A11 or -A15 amendments. The -A11 amendment contains the language we've been asking for all along, and we're willing to trade the certainties of SB 1593 A for the broad applicability of -A15 amendment if that is the legislature's preferred route toward a compromise.

Recreational liability protections enhance public safety by ensuring that outfitters, volunteer coordinators, and other trained professionals are able to continue to effectively lead group volunteer efforts to steward Oregon's natural resources for future generations.

Thank you for your leadership on this vital issue to the recreation community.

Bend Paddle Trail Alliance, Executive Committee

Justin Rae - President

Jayson Bowerman - Vice President

Stephen Junkins – Secretary

Jason Arbetter- Treasurer

<https://www.bendpaddletrailalliance.org/>