



SENATE MAJORITY OFFICE

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Oregon Senate Vote Today Backs Recreational Trail Access

Bill to shield landowners from lawsuits related to trail access passes unanimously

SALEM, OR – Landowners who allow the public no-cost access to their property for recreation purposes have protection against injury claims from those visitors under a bill that passed the Oregon Senate today.

The legislation was spurred by a 2023 court decision that opened landowners—private citizens and local governments—to liability when people use trails on their property. Senate Bill 179, sponsored by **Senate Judiciary Committee Chair Floyd Prozanski (D – Eugene)**, makes permanent safeguards first adopted last year.

“Oregonians love the outdoors. The bill we passed today helps maintain access to the beautiful places where they run, hike, bike, picnic, or simply enjoy the scenery,” said Senator Prozanski.

The 2023 court decision, *Fields v. City of Newport*, had prompted some trails to close. Protections in the bill passed today apply to public easements and unimproved rights of way, and to improved trails, roads, and paths that are used to access a location for recreational purposes.

Senate Bill 179 has wide support from the public. More than 100 people submitted statements backing the proposal when it had a public hearing in February. Among the supporters were Travel Lane County, the State Forests Trust of Oregon, the Salmonberry Trail Foundation, and the Oregon Association of Conservations Districts.

The bill now goes to the House of Representatives for consideration.

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