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Governor Signs Bill Restoring Recreational Immunity

SALEM, Ore. – Governor Tina Kotek today signed SB 1576, legislation containing temporary language which restores recreational immunity for local governments responsible for access to hiking trails and other recreational sites across Oregon.

A recent court ruling in a case involving an injury sustained on a public trail took away the immunity public and private landowners enjoyed when allowing free access to their property for recreational purposes. SB 1576 temporarily clarifies that running, walking, and cycling are recreational activities, and the public is not liable for injuries sustained while enjoying them.

“SB 1576 allows cities to open, and keep open, trails, bridges and staircases to allow Oregonians and their guests to recreate without carrying extra liability and risk for the public,” said League of Oregon Cities Lobbyist Scott Winkels. “It’s appropriate the Legislature adopted a temporary fix this session, and we look forward to working in the 2025 legislative session towards a durable solution to protect access to free recreation.”

CIS, which insures many of Oregon’s cities and counties, also issued the following statement:

“Because SB 1576 went into effect immediately, all trails that were previously closed due to the *Fields v. City of Newport* court decision can now be reopened without undue risk to local government budgets and programs. CIS’ previous advice to close improved trails is rescinded.

CIS is very happy to encourage local governments throughout Oregon to let their constituents know that all trails and recreational opportunities are open for business once again and will remain open throughout the summer season.”

About the League of Oregon Cities

Founded in 1925, the League of Oregon Cities is a voluntary association representing all 241 of Oregon’s incorporated cities. The LOC helps city governments serve their citizens by providing legislative advocacy services, policy consultation, intergovernmental relations assistance, networking and training, technical assistance, and publications.

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