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Comments: Hi folks,

I'm writing with some concern about the changes proposed by this legislation.

For one, this bill seems to be in favor of protecting wilderness, promoting a "leave-no-trace" policy. But without bolts, climbers will have a bit of a free-for-all with their rappels. They will be forced, in many cases, to rappel with ropes around plant life. Over time, this kills trees by rubbing off bark. In addition, without fixed, safer bolt anchors, climbers will walk all over the tops and bases of cliffs choosing individual rappel setups. This is far more disruptive to delicate alpine flora than having one single trail to and away from a good, bolted anchor.

Beyond this, the new legislation does nothing to address the additional burden that will be put on search and rescue teams (almost all volunteer) all over the country. If existing bolts are not allowed to be maintained, likelihood increases year by year of accidents where climbers suffer devastating falls on bad hardware. These are accidents that are guaranteed to have consequences, where a call for help will need to be made

As if increased load on search and rescue teams isn't enough, these teams will also suffer from missing or bad anchors. Climbing under one's own power is bad enough, but search and rescue teams have to stage complicated maneuvers with incapacitated victims on cliffsides. They can't do all of that while free climbing - they need reliable, sturdy hardware to anchor to while caring for victims.

Also, a prohibition on safe anchors will also make it harder for climbers to back off of routes that are beyond their limits or are becoming dangerous due to approaching bad weather or darkness. Climbers need to be able to self-rescue when they are out of their depth, and having reliable anchors is critical to safe self-rescue. Without these anchors, this is yet another circumstance in which even more will be demanded of already-strained search and rescue resources.

Finally, this bill makes no provision to support the additional staffing that will be necessary to document all existing anchors and enforce these regulations. I suspect that this will lead to lots of clandestine bolting that climbers feel is required for safety.

Instead of this bill as it stands, I would propose a bill that requires that climbers work with local climbing authorities and groups to keep existing bolted routes/anchors safe and maintained, while requiring a stringent approval process from the local community to add bolts to a cliff face.

Thank you!