

**From:** Steve Van Pelt  
**To:** [Ross Danielle](#)  
**Subject:** Re: HB 2320  
**Date:** Monday, April 03, 2017 12:50:58 PM

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Hi,

As a kiteboarder and watersports enthusiast, I want to take the time to express my concern regarding HB2320. My concerns regard the safety of the participants in the sport, and the impact that fee collection and regulation will have on the watersports community in Oregon.

First, regarding Section 11/1 (the use of PFD's on non-motorized watercraft). I believe this requirement can be dangerous and harmful to kiteboarders.

Here is some of the common thought on the subject:

*Dangerous line tangles while wearing PFDs*

- Approved PFD's that work correctly with kiteboarding waist harnesses are very rare. The common PFD's generally have large buckles and straps that can easily snag on the lines used when operating a kiteboarding kite. This creates a significant hazard for the rider. A snagged or tangled line can cause the rider to lose control of the kite and be dragged through the water or across the land. I wear a wetsuit and a light vest while kiting, both of which provide a fair amount of buoyancy. I am also a strong swimmer, as are most of the kiteboarders I know.

*Impact force when hitting the water while wearing PFDs*

- An integral part of kiteboarding is jumping. These jumps can be 20+ feet into the air, and at fairly high speeds. In a failed jump, a rider may hit the water at an unexpected angle. Without a PFD, the rider is able to break the surface tension of the water and may emerge sore, but otherwise unscathed. A PFD increases the impact forces when hitting the water significantly. This could make a failed jump extremely dangerous, if not fatal. Kiteboards are commonly designed with foot straps, instead of boots, so that in the case of a failed jump, the rider can jettison their board from their feet and avoid the heavy impact when their board contacts the water. Requiring that a PFD be strapped to one's body can be extremely dangerous for a kiteboarder.

- Very few kiteboarding deaths are preventable with use of a PFD. We are riding floating boards, powered by giant floating kites.

Secondly, I have concerns regarding the bill's purpose as a

*whole.*  
- I do not think that Education regarding non-motorized watercraft is lacking. There are many free resources regarding non-motorized watercraft safety. Youtube is full of kiteboarding instructional videos. These cover safety, riding techniques, gear selection, etc. There are also an abundance of instructors who will teach students for a fee.

- Adding fees and permits only hinders tourism to Oregon, and places an unfair burden on participants in sports that have minimal impact on the environment, and require little to no improved access points. Most of the money collected will go towards enforcement of the new laws. I would like to see more programs that encourage rather than exploit outdoor sports enthusiasts. It is encouraging to me that so many people are enjoying outdoor activities- this makes for great tourism, decreases the toll on our healthcare system, and makes people happier! It seems that legislators see this the other way around- that outdoor sports enthusiasts are out of hand and need to be controlled.

- If funds for access and safety are lacking, I would be in favor of a launch area specific fee, charged at each launch area. This money would be used to patrol the waters surrounding that launch and to maintain the launch facilities.

Thank you for taking the time to read this.