

Hello Representative:

I am writing in opposition to HB 4409 and HB 4138, which both seek to prevent boaters from wakesurfing and wakeboarding along a 20-mile stretch of the Willamette River. This is a very controversial issue that addresses state jurisdiction, homeowner concerns and the right of boaters to use public waters. I'm asking you to please act to delay further consideration of these bills until 2019, when there is time for the legislature to thoroughly debate the significant impact of a ban on access, and the merit of expanding the powers of the state Marine Board.

I work for Tige Boats and our company manufactures wakeboard/wakesurf boats that are sold by Oregon dealers. These are expensive luxury boats and I believe this ban would reduce the number of boats sold by local dealers. Reduced sales will directly impact the economic success of these businesses and threaten the jobs they provide in the community.

HB 4409 not only bans wakesurfing and wakeboarding, but goes so far as to require ballasted boats, and only ballasted boats, to go at no-wake speed throughout this 20-mile section of the river. Right now the Marine Board has no jurisdiction over erosion issues. HB 4138 gives it new responsibilities regarding shore erosion that it has no prior experience assessing.

To my knowledge, there has not been an effort to study the true impact of wakesurfing/wakeboarding on these shorelines.

These bills deserve close scrutiny and a robust debate by the legislature. The longer 2019 session is better suited to address such controversial bills.

It has been my experience that when all stakeholders are given the opportunity to meet, the result can be options that ensure that the rights of all involved are respected and addressed. However, this is the first time this bill has come before the legislature. There is little time during the short session for this kind of cooperative effort.

Please vote against HB 4409 and HB 4138 and provide an opportunity for the Marine Board to work with all stakeholders to develop consensus solutions.

Thank you.

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