

April 23, 2019

Senate Environment and Natural Resources Committee
Chair Michael Dembrow
Vice-Chair Alan Olsen
Committee Members

In support of HB 2351A

Dear Chair Dembrow, Vice-Chair Alan Olsen, Committee Members,

I am writing in support of HB 2351A. I live on the Willamette River in Portland, and serve as President of the Calm Water Coalition (CWC) which represents 500 members, including recreational users, residents, marinas, and businesses between Sellwood and the Columbia North Harbor. I also serve on the Board of Willamette Greenway Alliance (WGA), a group of coalitions working to protect and preserve the natural, scenic and recreational qualities of the Willamette River Greenway.

CWC members support HB 2351A because the river is their home; the Sellwood floating home moorages, marinas, and boathouses have been around since the turn of the century, some with generations of residents. As the insurance ad says, they "know a thing or two, because they've seen a thing or two." They protected their homes and boats during the Flood of '96, the floating pennywort infestation of 2013, and the toxic algae bloom of 2016. Now, they are concerned about saving their docks, decks, shoreline habitat and homes from the impact of high-energy waves generated by wake sport boats.

The impact of the artificially-generated high energy wake from these boats took them by surprise because during the 2-1/2 year construction of the new Sellwood Bridge, a 5mph No Wake zone slowed the boats in the entire construction area north and south of the bridge. In 2016 when the bridge opened, the onslaught of newly engineered high powered and heavy wake surf boats arrived suddenly and their impact on property, shoreline, and other users was immediate.

This legislation would authorize the Oregon Marine Board to adopt special regulations to protect the shoreline on the Willamette Greenway, and potentially alleviate the dramatic wake impact on river banks and structures. It could reduce the tens of thousands of dollars property owners have spent in the past two years on dock, deck and marina repairs from repetitive artificially-induced waves. And it could make the river safer for rowers,

kayakers, Dragon Boats and sailing, reducing the incidents of dangerous capsizing and swamping of boats by oversized wake.

Many coalition members in the Portland river community have worked over the years to support the river ecosystem, water quality and wildlife habitats through volunteer organizations like SOLV, Audubon Society, and Human Access Project. Floating home communities follow and financially support strict DSL, OSMB and DEQ guidelines and permitting procedures to ensure environmentally compatible moorages. They feel that the wake sport industry should operate under the same set of rules as they do in supporting the Willamette River Greenway.

This legislation is an opportunity for cooperation and better management of the river for all users. With the issues facing the Willamette River today, we request your support of HB 2351A to protect the shoreline, public and private property, and river habitats in the Willamette Greenway Plan.

Thank you for your consideration.

Renee Morgan



CALM WATER COALITION

Portland Rowing Club
Oregon Yacht Club
Macadam Bay Moorage
Waterfront Organization of Oregon (WOOO)
Human Access Project
Willamette Riverkeeper
Oaks Park Community Boathouse
Rose City Rowing Club
Station L Rowing Club
Lewis & Clark Rowing
Wasabi Paddling Club Dragon Boats & Outriggers
Willamette Sailing Club
Willamette Rowing Club
LO Community Rowing Club
Landing Boat Club
RiversWest Small Craft Center
Bridgeton Moorage
Oregon River Sustainability and Preservation Alliance (ORSPA)