

March 9, 2021

AGRICULTURAL & NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE TESTIMONY

Re: Opposition for HB 2555, Relating to motorboats; prescribing an effective date

Representative Brad Witt, Chair
Representative Vikki Breese-Iverson, Vice-Chair
Representative Zach Hudson, Vice-Chair
Distinguished Committee Members

I want to thank you for this opportunity to address HB 2555.

I urge you to oppose HB 2555 as it severely jeopardizes river water access, citizens' rights, and family recreational opportunities to Oregonians. Riverfront property owners, particularly the "Newberg Pool" section, have been very aggressive at trying to restrict or eliminate boating activities on the Willamette River. As a result, stringent boating rules and regulations already exist and are being enforced.

If enabled, HB 2555 will create an issue similar to the one that was resolved in 1967 by the Oregon Beach Bill (HB 1600 & HB 1601), where beachfront property owners were claiming ownership rights to beaches as an extension of their property and restricting public access. HB 2555 is much worse. Riverfront property owners are trying to control the use of the river for their benefit. Public waterways are NOT an extension of private property.

Again, I urge you to oppose HB 2555 and not let an elite group of riverfront property owners take control of this incredible public resource for their gain and pleasure.

Thank you for your attention to this critical issue and your commitment to the citizens of Oregon.

Steve Stamback