

Dear Chair Witt, members of the committee, my name is Tom Bride and I'm here to testify in opposition to House Bill 2555 and House Bill 2725.

As a boat owner I have paid my registration fees and complied with all the laws for since 1992. I have had my Boater Education card since 2009. Personally, I own a water ski boat that produces very little wake by design, but greater restrictions are not the answer here. Common sense should prevail.

We all have a right to access and enjoy our rivers. Instead of vilifying some boat owners we need to create the more appropriate way to share our waterways. Oddly, the worst offender for waking our marina is the Willamette Jetboats, and that is not addressed with either of these bills.

I understand why some riverfront homeowners and others have sought to create this new legislation, and I respect that we need to protect our waterways. Unfortunately, these proposed restrictions go too far and do not offer a balanced solution for everyone.

In college I was on the crew team. So, I respect the Portland rowing club and their need for calm water. As a Stand-up Paddleboarder I understand how a large wake can knock you off your board, or at least drop you to a knee. We are dealing with a new and different boating environment. Wake Surf Boats create a big wake, and we should be wary of this fact, but they should not be outlawed.

Instead of creating restrictions for an individual group of boat owners let's devise a plan to share our rivers. The early mornings can be reserved for the crew teams and people seeking a quitter time, the mid-day can be for families and the windy late afternoons can be for the Wake Surfers.

There already has been some restrictions from the Oregon State Marine Board to restrict tow sports in the downtown Portland area, and this assumption is inaccurate. I propose that the downtown area would be the best for large wakes. The northern end of Portland is industrial and could be designated as a "Wake Park."

Let's bring common sense back to this discussion instead of more restrictions that only serve the needs of a few people.

Thank you for your understanding.