

March 9, 2021

Good afternoon Chair Witt and Members of the Committee;

My name is Tara Platt and I am a homeowner that resides on the Willamette River along Butteville Road. I am writing to testify in opposition to HB 2555 and HB 2725. We bought our first boat about 10 years ago to provide a way for us to stay connected to our children and friends and since moving onto the river over 5 years ago, we have taught our nieces, nephews, parents, friends and their kids how to surf and ski. It brings joy to our hearts to be able to share our blessing with others.

Over the last couple of years a variety of restrictions and/or surf zones have been tested. The restrictions have led to increased conflict between folks recreating along the river and those who are opposed to water recreation. I recently learned that House Bills 2555 and 2725 would effectively take away our rights to towed water sports and completely strip away our ability to engage with our friends and family in the ways we have grown to love and enjoy – and honestly, the whole reason we bought our home.

I understand that erosion on the banks and damage to docks are the primary reasons to place this ban, yet there is no empirical evidence that directly links this damage or erosion to wake boats. As a homeowner residing on the river, I personally witness the extreme rise and fall of the water level by 5-10' in a matter of a couple days after heavy rains, snow melt, etc. The natural bank erosion is evident each time. I also understand that as a riverfront homeowner, regular dock maintenance and repair is necessary because of natural occurrences such as the changes in the river level, speed of the water, and high winds creating wakes with white caps.

If these Bills were in fact passed into law, it would effectively outlaw any standard multi-purpose boat and strip away our ability to enjoy the safe, socially distanced outdoor activities we enjoy with our families. It would create safety issues in other bodies of water in Oregon as it will cause overcrowding on other waterways. Additionally, I would fear that the State would not have the resources needed to enforce new laws and rules. Finally, I am seriously concerned about how our property value would be negatively affected should these additional restrictions be implemented. **Has the State considered how it will compensate homeowners who will immediately lose property value as a direct result of implementing these laws?**

In summary, I am in support of sharing the river with everyone who desires to recreate on and enjoy the water. **I support a solution that is inclusive, fair, and equitable** and these proposed bills are not. I strongly oppose these bills as they are discriminatory and unfair since they are founded on grounds that lack unbiased evidence while creating further division and violating our right to enjoy a public natural resource.

Thank you.



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