

Dear Rep Witt and committee, my name is Alexis Whalen and I'm from Keizer. My family and I are strongly oppose to this bill. My family and I enjoy boating on the Willamette river. I have three boys and currently boating is the only normal for them. School, sports, and social interaction is not what are used to be for them. Boating is there one emotional release, where they can forget their worries and just enjoy life. As a family we chose to get a boat instead of making one family trip a year based on our income. One family trip versus many outings on our boat is what we desired.

I believe this is headed by special interest groups, mainly kayakers and paddle borders. I believe kayakers and paddle borders can use any water way but they are trying to take away the one and only river deep enough for our boat in the valley. Between three teenagers schedules and my husbands work, it is very hard to find time to boat. But 25 minute getting to the Willamette makes it easier for quick day trips versus driving an 1.5/2 hours to a lake that will take the whole day.

I keep hearing that boaters are destroying docks, this is false. You already have limited us to very small sections of the river. Those sections are farmland and there are no docks. What is frustrating is in this limited space that's supposedly for surfing only; you will find tubers, wake borders, kayakers, and paddle borders. You educated surfers on what we were allowed to do, but you never educated the other people that they could not be in our small section.

I've heard numerous people say that we are unsafe but we are not. We have more education than any other public person out on the waterway about water safety. You made us get a boating license which was a four hour education, then you made us take additional wake surfing education. There is no education for paddle borders or kayakers. There's no additional education for jet skiers and fisherman. If you look at the past years you will not see a wake surfer who has died. But you will find kayakers, fisherman, paddle borders, and tragically last year at Foster Reservoir JetSki kill innocent kids. Four days ago Portland fire was out dragging for the body of a fisherman who went under. I would like to remind you that there are no wake surfing boats out there right now so we did not cause that accident. During winter season when multiple kayakers die, we are also not responsible for that because we are not out on the river.

When someone stated yesterday that there is a lot more tubing injuries than previously. I would like to point out that they are in our surfing area which they are not allowed to be in. Plus, there are more of them today then there was a couple years ago. I must state that tuber are by far the most reckless people out on the river. They are all about throwing kids off the tubes, they purposely want to have their kids flying across the water. To be able to throw your kid off the tube you must swerve and make crazy movements with your boat which are dangerous. Half the time they cut people off or ride closely behind us to catch our wakes. They should definitely have to take a water safety course. Surfer are going in a straight line at 10 miles versus swerving all over the place at 25 mph.

The last thing I would love you to answer is WHO paid for the scientific research? It seemed very bias. I would like to point out that rivers change all the time, great example would be the Colorado river carved out the Grand Canyon, pretty sure there were no wake surfing boats back then. This is nature and the five months of the year, limited to very few days of the week cannot be destroying the river beds. I have kayaked down many parts of the Willamette that are not deep enough for boats and I have seen erosion in many sections. You are selectively looking at a limited section of the river but if you open your eyes you would see erosion everywhere. Thank you for your time and please vote no.