

Chair Witt, members of the committee, my name is Scott Hix and I am here to testify in opposition to HB 2555 and HB 2725. I am a second-generation Oregonian that along with my wife has raised our four children over the past twenty years as part of the river community here in Wilsonville. We are very active on the river during the summer months fishing, swimming, canoeing/kayaking, paddle boarding and boating which includes waterskiing, tubing, wakeboarding and surfing. It is unimaginable for me to be witnessing the political maneuvering that has happened over the past few years and now on the call lead by a small minority of special interest groups and a few older well-funded individuals with little to no facts or science to support the most recent House Bills presented. Joanne Criscione that Chaiman Witt allowed 30 minutes of talk time was an obvious staged presenter from his personal pool of people he allowed to speak for these bills. To be clear, I own the river property next to Joanne who only purchased her river house 3 years ago. She is a wealthy realtor from Lake Oswego who is leading the charge for all the changes made on a river with most of her small supporters allowed to speak on the call by Mr. Witt. There are 14 houses on that stretch of river and all of us EXCEPT Joanne do not support this bill. Her pictures shown were not truthful or accurate as it relates to the erosion on the river. I challenge you all to come take a look closely at the Newberg Pool that has 353 homes residing and truly look at the science and facts before you allow such an overreaching set of bills to shut down a public waterway and treasured part of our Wilsonville community. It deserves at least the proper analysis and research vs. what has become an overly obvious political stunt. With over 150+ people on the call yesterday, Mr. Witt in a calculated method, positioned his "guest speaker" and the people he called to have an unfair share of voice including the top individuals supporting this bill. I am confident well over 70% of the people that where on the call are against these bills as most of us were not allowed to speak and the stronger voices not selected. Again, I suspect a political stunt by Mr. Witt as it is statistically impossible for the people he called on who are the main voices in support to have been called with so few of the stronger voices left off who oppose. You are rushing into a political vote that should be set aside for actual studies and scientific reviews before we even consider an over-the-top approach like HB2555 and 2725.

These bills would strip safe recreational outdoor opportunities for thousands of people and over 70% of the boats would become unusable along the Willamette River in the Newberg pool. The vast majority of boaters are safe and responsible. We should focus on increased education and enforcement of the existing rules. This section of the river is already highly regulated to towed sports with wake surfing only allowed in two 1-mile stretch areas where there are no docks or homes. These bills are not based in science. There is no empirical evidence that directly links erosion on the riverbanks or damage to docks to wake boats. The river is used by boaters for 3 months out of the year and mainly on weekends. This river raises and drops between 10-30+ feet six to eight months out of the year going back to many generations. These bills will also decimate small businesses that depend on the river for income.

I strongly request you do not support moving these bills forward without much more consideration to the science and negative impact on our community.

Thank You for hearing my testimony.

Scott Hix

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