

Chair Witt and members of the committee,

This is a critical time for Oregon due to COVID-19, racial equality concerns, rioting ruining downtown Portland, the aftermath of the wildfires and the rampant homeless issues. This is the time where the legislature should be spending it's efforts on the most pressing issues Oregonians face, as opposed to issues targeting a small group.

I have lived on riverfront in Wilsonville since 2002. I want to make it very clear to everyone, that in last night's public testimony, not everyone was able to provide testimony. Notably, who you didn't get to hear from was most of the other 85 households the live along the upper Willamette that are opposed to this bill any amendments to it. Being the largest stakeholders with the most on the line personally and economically, it is important that you hear from all of the riverfront homeowners and stakeholders before jumping to any type of decision regarding legislation. The river is crowded at times, yes, but if there truly was a widespread erosion problem, you would have a whole lot more complaints coming from us who live here.

The video showing grass along the side of the river represents less than 1% of the normal shore vegetation along the upper Willamette River. The real Willamette banks left undisturbed consist of alders and cottonwoods and a lot of deep rooting plants that do not have erosion issues. Because of the water level fluctuation, grass only can grow along the shore in the few summer months (June - Sept) when the water is low. Grass is not deep rooting, so it washes away easily as evidenced in that video, but then it grows back the next summer and washes away again, and so on and so on. The erosion studies say, it is upland watering, river flow and bank destabilization (landscaping and removal of deep rooting plants) that cause the majority of issues. Come back and look where you have a landscaped yard facing the river with the vegetation removed and you will find a slide soon.

The Willamette River is constantly muddy, the water is high and fast moving, and it is filed with debris for 4-5 months over the winter and early spring - not a boat in sight. It only gets muddy along a few shores over the busiest weekends during the summer between the 4th of July and Labor Day. All the other times, it is clear and calm just like you want it to be.

I am opposed to HB 2555 and any amendments to it. Thank you for opportunity to submit my testimony.