

This bill will remove a socially distant outdoor activity from Oregonians living on and around the Willamette River. I was born and raised on the river and have spent many summers with my family boating. With COVID happening last year we were so grateful to have our boat and the opportunity to use watersports as a way to stay outdoors and active. We care very much about our environment and understand that there is no empirical evidence that would suggest watersports damage banks in any way. We want to be able to boat for years to come so if it was the case that we were destroying our home we love so much we would take different actions. People with boats, like my family and I, would likely take our boat elsewhere in the summer, as I imagine many other people would. This would result in an increase in boater traffic in other areas of the pacific northwest, which could pose a danger to our environment as well as COVID risks as people would be forced closer together. The river is already highly regulated in this area, and the vast majority of boaters are safe and follow the rules. An increase in education and perhaps patrolling would be a much better solution. Personally, I would be extremely upset if this bill passed. Growing up on the river taught me to love and respect our beautiful outdoors so further generations can appreciate it for years to come. It would be a shame if this bill passed and this opportunity was taken away from others.