

Chair Witt, members of the committee, my name is Chris Mitchell, and writing in to testify in opposition to HB 2555 , 2725 and 2734.

I am a West Linn Riverfront property owner , small business owner and the chair of the West Linn Riverfront Association .

The West Linn River Association is a 501C whose membership is made up of a wide variety home owners from the upward of 450 West Linn Riverfront households in West Linn.

I strongly oppose the proposed legislations HB2555 , 2725 &HB 2734

In conversations with my Riverfront neighbors it has become apparent to me that most of these households have no idea that these Proposed pieces of Legislature are even being considered, let alone happening under the cover of the COVID19 government enforced lockdown , or that for years now there has been a very structured and meticulously planned attack on their river access by a small very well organized aggressive* self serving minority group including the Willamette Riverkeeper*, The Calm Water Coalition and a small number of waterfront property owners who are now done with their own towed sports endeavors and now seek privacy in their waterfront homes under the guise of perceived dock damage mitigation.

Under the cover of COVID these groups who have issue with Wakesports have brought extreme pressure to bear on Government' in an off the grid, aggressive push to see these sports banned from a place that they would like for their own use exclusively.

Much like its very popular and widely accepted cousins, Skateboarding and Snowboarding , Wakesurfing is being ignorantly misrepresented by those who see it as a threat to their elitist life style

There certainly may have been isolated incidents of misuse of boats by a small number of uninformed Wakeboaters that have created ill will , but these issues should have been be addressed by education and the enforcement of the existing rules (which have not been tested to see if they are effective) governing the waterway use, not by adding more rules .

These current proposed pieces of legislation seek to disenfranchise a large part of the Oregon boating community to provide sanctuary to a very small percentage of river users and an even smaller percentage of Oregoneons.

The order of events on these bills seems to be a case of putting the horse before the cart or assuming guilt before evidence is even gathered.

With regard to the 4000lb weight restriction ,Many small & medium sized boats including my families 20ft boat ,which has a tournament water ski rating , would not make the cut for certification under the

weight restrictions being proposed, meaning I and many others would not even be able to waterski or tow a child on a tube in the Newburg pools.

A large number of family pleasure craft manufactured today would also struggle to meet this criteria.

As was the intention of the the writers of this act highlighted by the late inclusion of language banning wake surfing , it will once again target Wakeboard & Wakesurf boats while also making “ friendly fire "casualties along the way of many other family pleasure craft to provide exclusivity to a small aggressive minority .

The proposed excise tax review is yet another example of the direct targeting of these sports by a heavily biased group seeking personal river exclusivity

This is a matter for the whole of Oregon to decide after extensive studies on the area in question have been performed not a decision to be made under the cover of a COVID pandemic shut down and without the knowledge of most of the taxpaying parties directly effected by its out come.

Speaking to the science, Rep Witt and committee members – to para phrase Mr Fallis & Ms Harris- if you bring your own supporting scientist with selective input you will always get the results you need to make your point.

There seems to have been an ability for the proponents of this bill to furnish professional witnesses

Contrary to some of the other testimony , it has been my observation that it is the annual flooding makes the significant changes to our shoreline not the Wakeboats conveniently touted by those wishing to see them banned.

As a point of order, I would like to go on record objecting to the obviously partisan 22 minute unfit checked presentation being allowed to be given by a member of the public with no formal reason to have this access. This is damning to the integrity of the hearing , one side has been allowed to present a veritable unsubstantiated fairy tale as “evidence” using erroneous information, being offered up as factual, all the while misrepresenting their identity on screen. Other members of the public were cut off at one minute of talking time and often had their questioning of questionable data belittled.

I would like to formally complain about the the rude aggressive behavior of the scientific presenter from the Willamette Riverkeeper Travis Williams (see attached photos) who made threatening and disgusting gestures and mouthed profanity on screen during my statement to the Committee.

I would ask that he be sanctioned and not allowed to appear at future public gatherings on this topic, as it appears he poses an on going risk for harassment to these opposing his views.

Please inform me if there is another process for this procedure.