

terry | GLENN

6/1/2021

To: Senate Rules Committee, State of Oregon

From: Terry Glenn, Concerned Citizen, Boater,
Chairman City of Portland River Community Advisory Committee

RE: Support SB 857-1 – Weight Limit of Towed Sport Boats

I am writing in support of the maximum loading weight of a motorboat must be less than 4,000 pounds to obtain towed watersports motorboat certificate. While the bill currently pertains to the Newberg Pool area of the Willamette, it has impact and benefit on all recreational boating in Oregon by discouraging that type of boat.

Boat wakes cause damage to docks, boats, and shorelines, and routinely cause injuries. It is not uncommon for a large wake to knock someone into the water, or cause an injury attempting to remain standing. Wakes bounce even large boats against docks, and efforts to prevent damage can cause severe injuries.

All boats create wakes. But relatively new “wake boats” use various technology including ballast tanks to exaggerate the wake produced to enhance the brief period of boat use in which someone is actually “wake boarding”. While wake boarding is enjoyable and challenging endeavor, the enhanced boat wake has negative implications on everyone else. These boats are often utilized in their maximum wake configuration even when not engaged in wake boarding.

A common stoutly built 21 ft boat weighs in well below the proposed 4,000lb limit. The only purpose of a boat designed to enhance wake is the momentary enjoyment of the singular person being towed, at the expense of everyone else in the vicinity.

The floating home community is constantly challenged by boat wakes, and actively seeks to educate the boating community, post and maintain signage, and seek enforcement of speed limits. Wake boats cause exaggerated wakes and are often operated by the least experienced boaters.

It is understandable wake boat manufacturers would put substantial resources behind protecting their market share. If discouraged from selling wake boats, they will find other styles equally as popular, especially with today's COVID-fueled interest in boating.

If every boater was courteous, experienced, and attentive, the type of boat would make little difference. Unfortunately that seems unachievable.

Please support weight limits on towed sport boats.

Thank you,

Terry Glenn
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