

# House Committee on Rules

## Re: SB 857

Hello, my name is Eric Lintner. I have lived on the Willamette River just west of Wilsonville since 1987. During that time, I've enjoyed many forms of watersports, including mainly waterskiing and kayaking, but also wakeboarding and wake surfing. In this time, I have seen quite a change in the boats used and the wakes created.

I have a few points I would like to make:

- Please look around the world and notice the issues created by large wakesports boats. This is not unique to Oregon.
- The manufacturers are encouraging sales, as there are large profit margins in these boats.

Here's what "Oregon Families for Boating" (organization supported by the wakesports boat manufacturers) says:

- **It will strip safe, socially distant outdoor opportunities for hundreds of families along the Willamette and impact local small businesses.** Yes, it is true that some families along the Willamette will no longer be able to use their wake boats, but that doesn't mean they can't sell them and buy a boat better suited to this river. If they had been concerned about the river and other users, they would not have purchased such a large, heavy boat with the ability to make such enormous wakes.
- **This bill is not based on science** – Local government agencies, hydrologists, geotechnical and civil engineers, ecologists and arborists all agree the lack of native vegetation and mismanagement of native trees is causing the majority of the erosion on the river, not towed water sports. This is a smokescreen and is simply not true. Bill sponsors have provided ample scientific studies to show that wake boats cause erosion. As a property owner, I have personally experienced far more erosion in the last 5 years than in the previous 29 years combined.
- **The Newberg Pool is already one of the most regulated bodies of water in Oregon, and wake surfing is only allowed in two small zones with no adjacent homes.** That's because this has been a long and hard-fought battle and some of the previous rules have been difficult to enforce. It is clear that wake surfing is not appropriate for the Newberg Pool portion of the Willamette. Let's make some rules like this one that are enforceable.
- **This bill not only exacerbates safety issues, but it also fails to solve a primary issue – enforcement.** The state has already struggled to enforce the laws and rules we have, and the bills do not address how to deal with the worst offenders who make the river dangerous for everybody. It's unclear how this bill can exacerbate safety issues. True, there are some offenders that are worse than others, but it is the size of the wakes that are doing the damage and are causing most of the safety concerns. Bad behavior needs to be addressed, but the boats are simply too big and heavy and the wakes too large for this narrow, soft-banked river. Also true, enforcement has been difficult. That's why we need a new rule that is easier to enforce – this one!

I was involved in this issue 10-15 years ago when the first Marine Board administrative rules were made in an attempt to mitigate the effect of wake sports in the Newberg Pool. Those rules were not enforced and the boats continue to grow. The damage is accelerating. Please vote to approve SB 857. This will make the river much more useable for the majority of people – not just for those with the biggest boats.

Thank you  
Eric Lintner  
Wilsonville