

I am writing to oppose SB 857. This legislation is born out of special interest agendas and is not representative of the community at large.

I was raised and born in Portland Oregon and have been an avid watersports lover since my very early years. I have 40+ years of great memories spending time with my family and friends waterskiing, wakeboarding, and tubing on the Willamette river in the Newberg Pool area and have not seen evidence of mass erosion. In addition to an active user of the river, I also rent a slip on the river every year at Boones Ferry Marina. This bill would significantly impact this marina and other businesses in the community that rely on our summer activity. I would be hard pressed to count on one hand the number of boats that would meet the 4000 pound restriction. It is frustrating to see an ever increasing number of rules targeting the wake boat owners with the sole purpose of restricting our access to waterways.

Our waterway policies should be grounded in solid research and favor the general public, not select waterfront homeowners and paddlers looking to eliminate motorized boating for their own personal gain. Real studies should be conducted to determine the best ways to keep the river safe and healthy. Furthermore, 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. The better solution is to expand boater education to everyone beyond just wake boat owners so everyone can know the rules and share the river. Below are additional reasons you should oppose the bill:

- * Unfairly targets wakeboat owners and prioritizes the interests of non-motorized activities and waterfront homeowners above everyone else.
- * Punishes wakeboat owners who already pay substantially more money than non-motorized activities through bi-annual registration to the marine board and the newly bi-annual Towed Watersports permit.
- * Unfairly restricts boats that come from the factory with integrated ballasts which exceed the 4000 pound restriction, but there is no way to enforce older or smaller boats that add aftermarket weights or ballast and exceed this restriction.
- * Weight restriction factors in the total potential weight of a boat and not the actual weight being used.
- * The weight restriction of 4000 pounds is unrealistic and would impact too many boat owners who have made significant investments in their boats. How will the boat owners be compensated for their loss of use?
- * The proposed bill along with other recent bills affecting the lower Willamette river will restrict over 40 miles of waterway from wakeboat use. Why are such a vast amount of the river being restricted from the general public.
- * This 40 miles is the most usable portions of the Willamette river and forces Wakeboat owners into a small section of river that will be congested and is toxic from superfund clean-up areas and is downstream from floating ghost ships that discharge their sewage into the river. Would you allow your children to play in toxic water?
- * There simply are not enough alternative locations for wakeboat users. Hagg lake is a small lake which cannot handle the increased number of boats that would look for alternative locations if this bill is passed. Detroit lake is over 2 hours away and again not a reasonable answer for those that live in the Portland area.
- * Wakeboarders and surfers invest and support the many businesses in their community. This is not an inexpensive sport and we put millions of dollars into the community through purchases of boats, gear, gas, and food.
- * The biggest changes to the river occur during the winter months when the water is running fast and high – rising over 10 feet. During the winter months, the river is not a calm pool as some are claiming, don't be misled.

This bill will make our waterways less safe and negatively impact Oregon families and small businesses. The House already extensively debated this bill and did not move forward. I respectfully urge you to do the same. Oregon needs our senators focused on COVID, economic recovery and getting our kids back in school. Please do not waste time on this unnecessary legislation. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Bryant McArthur