

Submitter: Brian Peterson

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Energy and Environment

Measure: SB1589

Dear Representatives,

I honestly cannot believe I'm having to write to oppose this SB again (SB 1589). I just don't understand how this keeps making its way through the legislature, especially when it's being pushed by a select few, which negatively impacts so many.

I strongly oppose SB 1589, which will further restrict the Willamette River to boaters. This legislation is not representative of the community at large. The amended language they added to this bill effectively bans completely wakesurfing (or any activity that you are propelled by the wake – doesn't matter what you are on – surfboard, wakeboard, foil, paddle board) and it adds about additional miles of ban. This isn't a compromise, it is just "taking more."

I have lived on the Willamette River (in the Newberg Pool) for more than 24 years, and my family has owned the property since the early 1960's. I've personally used the river for the last 40 years. Over the past decade I've seen restriction after restriction, all being pushed by a few individuals with no care for the larger population of recreaters.

I agree these larger waves could be somewhat destructive to docks (granted there are no studies), but the current rules are perfect for keeping those surfing zones away from the areas populated with docks. So that is my question, why change the current rules when they are working just fine, and it allows for everyone to share the river?

I know the group is pushing for erosion issues and dangers to salmon, but again, there hasn't been a single study done on either point, other than a few pictures of silt being disturbed on the banks. If you want to see silt and erosion, go take a look at the river right now. It sits well above flood stage for most of the winter. Boating only occurs for a very brief 3-4 month period, and mainly on weekends.

As a watersport community, we have tried for years to work with this small but vocal group of people. Using the surf zones created by the Oregon State Marine Board. Obtaining the required "Towed Sport Certification" through additional education and fees. Not to mention that the Towed Sports Certificate is only targeted towards wakeboarders and wakesurfers, not all tow sports like water skiing and tubing. Even suggesting a directional option that would keep people from passing back and forth in front of someone's home. All with no avail, they are not willing to compromise in any

direction.

There is list of over 100+ homeowners that live in this section of the Willamette river that oppose these suggested laws. That is just the group that is aware of what is happening. Most have no clue that this bill is even being considered. I can't begin to comprehend the impending damage to real estate values should this pass.

Law Enforcement should not, and cannot be focused on this. They do not have the time or resources. They should be focusing on enforcing the existing laws and for safety.

Our waterway policies should be grounded in solid research and favor the general public, not select waterfront homeowners and paddlers looking to restrict towed water sports for their own personal gain. Real studies should be conducted to determine the best ways to keep the river safe and healthy. 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. 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.

This bill will make our waterways less safe and devastate families and small businesses in Aurora, Canby, Newberg, West Linn, Wilsonville and more. This is a duplicate bill that was already extensively debated and did not move forward. Please do not waste time on this unnecessary legislation.

Sincerely,  
-Brian Peterson