

Submitter: Steven Smith

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Environment and Natural Resources

Measure: SB1589

I am writing to express my strong opposition to SB 1589. I am asking for an open mind that you read this letter and understand how many thousands of people you would be affecting if this bill gets passed...Not only monetarily with lost jobs and wages due to this crushing blow to the boating and affiliated industries, but also with the family memories that would be destroyed by limiting such a wonderful activity that thousands of people enjoy. During early Covid, when most activities and plans were getting cancelled, my family of 6 purchased a 14-year-old 20' Mastercraft boat to enjoy family activities on the water. We learned to tube, wakeboard, and wakesurf on the various parts of the Willamette River right near West Linn. It truly was the highlight of our last two summers, and will continue to create amazing family memories for years to come. In fact, we have spent many thousands of dollars locally on supplies, reupholstering our boat in Clackamas, repairs in West Linn and Oregon City, etc. so there are direct dollars flowing through our local economy.

As motorboat owners, our family and friends get so much enjoyment out of spending time together on the river swimming, boating, tubing and surfing. We are responsible, respectful, safe and educated boaters and enjoy the river in exactly this manner. We have followed the rules and applied for all of the necessary education programs and licenses. As a resident of West Linn who lives about 5 minutes from the 10th Street Willamette (Bernert Park) boat ramp and about 15 minutes from the Hebb Park boat ramp, it is very convenient to take my kids and their friends out on the water for a couple hours of fun and fellowship. I also feel that the West Linn and surrounding areas don't really have access to adequate waterways as certain reps have stated in the past. Hagg Lake is a 1 hour one way drive from West Linn while Detroit Lake is roughly 2 hours one way. If we are concerned about the environment, then why would I burn an additional hundreds of gallons of gas just to pull my boat for hours and hours to get to a lake when the Willamette is a few minutes away?! I typically take family and friends out during the early afternoon on weekdays as well as weekends. During amazing summer days where the weather is 90-100 degrees, certain sections of the river can get crowded, especially around the Lake Oswego area. But the upper Willamette has plenty of room, especially around the area by the Willamette Falls, for everyone to enjoy, and there are less parks where people swim, kayak, and paddleboard so that removes some of the crowding risk from people who just want to float on the river. With the new rules that are already restricting use on the lower Willamette and now proposing even more restrictions on the upper Willamette, I feel you are bowing down to environmental pressures but not factoring in any other issues, such as mental health, family memories, fun family activities, etc. I understand some of the concern is about erosion along the river, but going from

tons of families and boats enjoying their time on the river to absolutely nobody being able to enjoy their time if a boat is 4,000-6,000 lbs or being able to wakesurf is such an extreme knee-jerk reaction in the opposite direction. Erosion should NOT be the only factor in your decision. Housing prices will certainly fall, as well as property tax revenues, if these beautiful and expensive waterfront homes aren't allowed to enjoy the river and all activities on a decent size boat. My 14-year-old boat is 3500lbs dry plus a little bit of factory ballast and I am able to enjoy all activities. It is a fairly small boat that barely holds 10 kids. But even a slightly larger boat should be allowed to allow larger groups to enjoy our river and make memories. Not everyone affected by this new rule owns a 9,500lb megaboat worth hundreds of thousands of dollars.

I understand the need to limit gargantuan size boats that produce monster wakes,