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Dear House Committee on Environment and Natural Resources,

I was prepared to testify in **opposition of SB 1589** in person today, but as you know we ran out of time for all participants that wished to speak. I am disappointed that I am not able to attend the 2<sup>nd</sup> hearing in person. Although I do not own a large wakeboat, my family will lose access to this public water recreation if this regulation is allowed to pass. Please consider my comments in opposition to today's public hearing:

1. **Several hundred boats will be affected.** This regulation will affect many more boats than supporters of this bill have claimed. Just because my boat is not moored in the Newberg pool (it is parked at our home when not in use), does not mean it should be excluded from the data. Most of us remove our boats from the water each day we use it, and therefore would also be affected by this proposed regulation. Using the tiny fraction of boats that are "moored" in the Newberg pool is simply wrong!
2. **"99% of boats will not be affected" is untrue!** My family is a perfect example. We do not own a wakeboat, but since we needed a boat to legally seat 9 family members and kids (Rep. Schouten small boat AR190 she used as an example today has a legal maximum of 8), it would be banned from even towing our kids on waterskis or recreational tubes. Many boats like ours exceed the 5000 lbs capacity even though they are not "wakeboats". This regulation would ban all recreational boats that basically larger than Rep. Schouten's.
3. **This regulation would ban more than wakesurfing.** The majority of the Newberg pool is already regulated to prohibit wakesurfing. However, if this new regulation takes effect many of us who enjoy other towed recreation will no longer be allowed simply because of an arbitrary weight limit. This includes small wake recreation like skis or tubing for hundreds of boat owners, not just large wakeboats. Meanwhile large boats that are not towing a child on an innertube are still allowed to pass though the entire stretch of the pool creating unrestricted large wakes (even outside of the current wakesurf regulation areas). This does not make sense.
4. **Newberg pool is already regulated for safe watersports and boating alike.** Supporters of this bill claim it is dangerous to have wakeboats and casual boaters on the same river. However, currently wakeboats are limited to only a few miles at the beginning and end of the Newberg pool and do not interfere with most of the stretch of river. This has created a cooperative use of the river and separated a safe space for wake sports to occur outside of normal boat traffic.

5. **Current regulations protect and encourage the care of the Newberg pool.** The current towed waterports certification and regulation allow for the safe and shared use of this public waterway. The education programs, licensing of towed drivers (both young and old), and safety training is good for the community and the care for the river. Please do not change what is working! We need to keep this current program in place while we do more research on the river environment and how best to improve our use of it.
6. **Boat recreation on the Willamette is good for our kids.** During the Pandemic we found help from the difficult times by seeking outdoor, safe recreation on the river. The activity encourages young kids to put down their screens, get away from the computer for a bit, and experience the Oregon outdoors. My 12-year-old daughter and her friends have become better swimmers, gained boating safety education, experienced outdoor exercise, and a special love for the Willamette river while recreating in the Newberg pool. They cried when I told them this regulation will no longer allow them to use the river for recreation.
7. **Please keep current regulations intact until the proper research has been completed.** No one cares more for the river than the people who swim, fish, and boat on the water. Please give the chance for the current regulations and education programs to exist for a few years while we continue research on the best use and protection of our public waterway.

My family, friends, and our boating community sincerely hope you **oppose SB 1589**. We are all for cooperation and shared use of the Willamette River, but this additional regulation unfairly bans a large majority of the public (not just wakesurf boats!) to use this resource without quality environmental research and studies.

Sincerely,

Steve Marko