

Submitter: Randy Gay

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Environment and Natural Resources

Measure: SB1589

SB 1589 will strip safe, socially distant outdoor opportunities for hundreds of families along the Willamette and impact local small businesses who depend on their support. There is no empirical evidence or peer-reviewed study that links the proposed restrictions to having any positive effect on fish populations. Wake sports largely take place in the summer, outside of key migratory or spawning months.

Studies show that wake boats waves, when operated at least 200 feet from shore, do not carry enough energy to have a significant impact on most shorelines.

Residential development, not boat wakes, is the primary human-caused source of erosion. There is broad agreement that the lack of native vegetation and homeowner mismanagement of native trees has caused the majority of erosion. Furthermore, natural occurrences such as last winter's storm have a greater impact on river health than boating.

The Newberg Pool is already one of the most regulated bodies of water in Oregon. Wake surfers are already subject to a weight limit, required to obtain a special safety certification and only allowed in two small zones with no adjacent homes or docks.

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 extensive laws and rules we have, and the bill does not address how to deal with the worst offenders who make the river dangerous for everybody.

Subjecting only towed water sports enthusiasts to a weight limit is overtly biased. A 5,000-pound fishing boat can produce a similar wake to the same size tow boat. Furthermore a 15,000 cabin cruiser that produces a wake far greater than any wake surfing boat can still operate freely under this legislation.

The thought that we cannot create a safe, fair solution for this is beyond comprehension. To completely shut down the river to these watersports is detrimental to families, businesses and our local community in ways that go far beyond measurable points. I firmly believe we could different make limits, create certain times that are restricted or be creative rather than just shutting everything off! I truly hope you will honestly weigh all of this before you make such a tremendous decision.

Thank you for your time.