

Submitter: Austin Walker

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources and Wildfire

Measure: SB1590

My name is Austin Walker and I would like to testify in support of SB 1590. I have grown up boating on the upper Willamette, with my fondest memories being those with my family and friends on the water. Three years ago I bought a home on the Upper Willamette near Hebb park for the sole purpose of spending our summer months on the water. My wife, myself and our children spend virtually every afternoon in the summer on the Upper Willamette. Our family and friends with their children all participate in towed watersports with us as well.

Each of my neighbors on Riverlane and Riverbend have boats and we all enjoy towed watersports. For the past three years we have complied with all changing boating regulations, including the towed watersports rules put into law. Our boat is registered, we obey the rules and are respectful of the waterway. This proposed bill will allow our ability to enjoy our time on the water with our boat, in our backyard. The sole reason we purchased our home was to utilize the Upper Willamette throughout the summer and I can provide the names and contact information for each of my neighbors that will testify the same.

I believe the best path forward is continuing with the towed watersports endorsement program and education for boaters. Although I was not in favor of the towed watersports program at first, I value the safety and education it has provided as I enjoy the river with my family.

I strongly urge you to vote in support of the proposed SB 1590 as it will increase public access to the Upper Willamette. Thank you for your time and consideration.  
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