

Submitter: Aaron Rosborough

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources and Wildfire

Measure: SB1590

For decades, families have safely enjoyed towed watersports like tubing, waterskiing and wakeboarding in the Newberg Pool - an area of deep water on the Willamette River from the mouth of the Yamhill River to Willamette Falls. In 2022, the legislature narrowly passed SB 1589, which devastated the local boating community. The bill banned the majority of families registered to participate in towed watersports in the Newberg Pool by setting an arbitrarily low weight limit. While the bill was well-intentioned, it kicked hundreds of families off the river and local small businesses have suffered millions in economic losses due to recreation decline.

SB 1590 is well-considered reform that puts forth the most effective Newberg Pool regulations tested over the last five years. Carrying forward the Oregon State Marine Board's (OSMB) Newberg Pool Towed Watersports Education Program ensures boat drivers in this region continue to be some of the most knowledgeable in the state and support safe towed watersports. Restoring carefully planned zones by the OSMB, shaped with input from diverse river stakeholders, ensures safety for river users and the environment by limiting towed watersports to suitable areas. Implementing a standard weight limit prevents larger boats from towing riders and streamlines enforcement.

Recreational boating provides significant social and economic benefits, supporting \$2.3 billion in economic impact, over 8,000 jobs and over 400 local businesses. The sport helps contribute \$25 million annually from the federal government to important Oregon conservation and waterway projects. Oregonians spend more than 6.8 million activity days per year participating in towed watersports and cruising, making SB 1590 important to ensure Oregonians have access to the great outdoors.

I urge you to support Oregon families and small businesses by passing SB1590. The bill's common-sense improvements will ensure the Newberg Pool can be safely shared for generations to come.