

TO: Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Wildfire
RE: Comments on SB 1590

Dear Chair Golden and Members of the Committee,

I strongly support the improvements within SB 1590.

My wife and I are second generation boaters and playing on the water is the number one thing our 4 kids enjoy in common. We live in Sherwood, have owned our boat for 7 years, and would regularly go to the Newberg Pool together.... until recently.

SB 1590 is a commonsense correction that will restore access to families, maintain safety, and help streamline/standardize enforcement so everyone can enjoy the water together.

I have read the written statements for this bill and would like to address a few of the reoccurring opposition points.

Fossil Fuel/environment

The two main alternative locations that permit wake sports are the Columbia River and further down the Willamette. Both options result in boat owners using more fuel, not less. In both areas the water moves more quickly, and boats burn much more fuel than in slower moving inland rivers, such as the Newberg Pool. In addition, the long drive to any other bodies of water increases fuel usage as well.

Other options for towed water sports

Unfortunately, there aren't many. The alternatives are either hours away or severely overcrowded. However, there are many local rivers ideal for non-motorized activities.

Damage to shoreline

A peer reviewed study in 2022 found:

"The testing [4] [8] suggests a distance of 200 feet allows the wave train to dissipate enough to cause little or no impact on the shoreline."

"Numerical Study of the Impact of Wake Surfing on Inland Bodies of Water"

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Safety and other irritants.

Boaters spend time and money getting licensed, taking safety courses, obtaining insurance etc... unlike non-motorized activities. And as a boater who enjoys the river with my family, we take the safety of ourselves and others very seriously! But the feeling I get from statements in opposition is that kayakers or paddle sport enthusiasts simply disagree with having to share the water with any motorized craft.

I complete support the Towed Watersports Education program, standardizing eligibility, continuing to maintain a safe distance from shore and docs, and keeping different activities limited to specific zones.

The river is vital resource for fun, family, and the community to share. Please vote YES on SB 1590

Sincerely,
Mike Houghton
Sherwood OR