

Members of the committee thank you for having me. My name is Paige Stoyer, I live in a floating home on the river, and enjoy motorized and non-motorized activities on the water. I co-founded the Willamette River Community Coalition, to bring all river users together to find ways to work together to safely share the river.

Our group supports SB301, which simply asks for a small change to ensure everyone applying for a towed sports endorsement in the Newberg Pool is treated equally. The bill does not allow wake surfing or using ballast; all the same rules and current weight limit still apply.

Speaking to those who worked on and supported 1589, including Representative McLain, they made it clear this was not their intent to ban a family's boat that is actually under the weight limit. She is very much in favor of this fix because she knows that it does not change the rules or undue anything that 1589 was designed to do.

I am an environmentalist who worked for Greenpeace and a member of Environment Oregon. It's critical we look at the facts around erosion.

I point you to the detailed site investigation of the Newberg Pool by civil and environmental engineer David Gorman clearly stating that there is no evidence that boat wakes were causing the bank erosion and failure. Erosion and bank failures occurred where vegetation had been removed, even in places with no motorized boats. In areas with heavy boat use he found stable banks where there was healthy riparian vegetation in place.

If we aren't honest about the real cause how will we solve the problem? Are we going to continue to ignore the need to replant and reinforce banks to prevent erosion including from high water in the spring?

Oregon Fish and Wildlife and the American Sport Fisherman's Association have stated there is no evidence boat wakes in the Newberg Pool threaten Salmon populations.

All that said SB 301 still doesn't remove any of the restrictions put into place because of these erroneous claims. It simply asks for the same boat weight limit to apply to everyone.

It's especially disappointing to me that so many groups continue to intentionally mislead people on these issues. Including using photos of wakesurfing in asks for people to testify against SB301, knowing this bill doesn't remove the ban on wake surfing. They have no good argument against this bill so instead have chosen to try and mislead people about it.

Let's stop this ongoing effort to unfairly single out and villainize one groups of users, who are following the rules by getting a boat that is under the limit and trying to get the proper endorsement for it. The weight limit for the towed sports endorsement should apply to everyone equally.

Please support SB 301 which simply corrects this inequity.

Thank you very much

I am adding the following comments after the testimony on 3/26 because I think much of what you heard from the opposition was not only extremely misleading because none of it relates to what SB 310 actually says or does, but it also is very revealing about the willingness to continue to try to unfairly restrict public access/recreation on the river.

Those testifying against 301 are well aware of what the bill does and doesn't do, and yet they still testified that these hundreds of families should continue to be banned from using their boats to be able to water ski or tube with their families, despite those boats being under the existing weight limit. The same weight limit that these groups themselves had asked for.

It speaks to an extreme level of entitlement by a handful of private homeowners simply seeking to keep as many people off the water as they can, so it will be calmer and quieter for them. As someone who also lives

on the river, I know it is a privilege to be allowed to live on our public waterway and that these waters don't belong just to us, they belong to all Oregonians. We should always aim to protect public access and certainly to make sure any rules apply equally to everyone. Which, of course, is all SB 301 seeks to do.

Lastly, I must respond to the false claims that these families will somehow continue to use ballast in the Newberg pool. Ballast that, in some cases, isn't even installed on their boats.

If they were willing to violate the rules, they could simply go out without the endorsement. Instead, they want to follow the rules and get the endorsement, which is why they are putting so much effort into this bill to be able to do that.

There is also no need for using ballast because wakesurfing is not allowed, and any violation of that rule is easily observable and is probable cause to stop someone. Additionally, during a time when surfing was allowed but ballast was not, people were indeed ticketed for using ballast because it is actually quite obvious when someone is using it. Contrary to claims made during testimony yesterday, most boats take between 10- 17 minutes to drain ballast tanks. You can also see it shooting out the sides of the boat, so if someone were stopped for signs of using ballast, they could not suddenly hide its use.

But again, if you can't wakesurf, you have no reason to be using ballast.

Lastly, I want to speak to those saying there should be a study before deciding if people should be treated equally under these rules. It is clearly meant as a delay tactic, and we should not let another summer go by where people are unfairly banned from using their boats on the water.

Their request is also ironic because we spent years asking them to follow through on a study before seeking to restrict public access. Approximately 6 years ago, I reached out to the Calm Water Coalition because I wanted to better understand their concerns about erosion on the upper, and I met with two of the people who testified yesterday against 301. They assured me

they were going to do a study on it to better show the causes of erosion and I told them that was great. They never did the study, and I could never get an answer from them on why. I was later informed the decision was based on these homeowners being told that a study would in fact show the erosion was caused by their removal of trees and other vegetation on the banks, not from boats.

We agree that they should have done the study to have the facts before seeking to impose the current regulations, which make the Newberg Pool the most restricted waterway in the state. Unfortunately, they did not.

Eventually, a homeowner finally did bring in an expert to find out why their banks in the Newberg Pool were eroding and I reference that site study above and it was provided to legislators as well. Indeed the erosion is not caused by boats, but by the removal of native trees and vegetation on the banks.

