

From: [Renee Morgan](#)
To: [Exhibits HNR](#)
Subject: In Support of HB 2352
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February 12, 2019

Chair Representative Brad Witt
Vice-Chair Representative Chris Gorsek
Vice-Chair Representative Sherrie Sprenger
Representative Greg Barreto
Representative Caddy McKeown
Representative Jeff Reardon
Representative David Brock Smith

In Support of HB 2352

Dear Chair Witt, Vice-Chair Gorsek, Vice-Chair Sprenger and Members of the Committee:

I am writing in support of HB 2352 which creates a towed watersports program within the State Marine Board. I live on the Willamette River in Portland, and serve as organizer of the Calm Water Coalition (CWC) which represents 500 members, including recreational users, residents, marinas, and businesses between Sellwood and the Columbia North Harbor. I also serve on the Board of Willamette Greenway Alliance (WGA), a group of coalitions working to protect and preserve the natural, scenic and recreational qualities of the Willamette River Greenway.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today.

The growing concern for user conflict on the Willamette Rivers has spread from the Upper Willamette to the Multnomah Channel in the past two years. In response to safety, environmental and property issues around high-energy wake, the coalition members throughout the river support HB 2352. This bill requires an enhanced education program to towed sports operators, with special attention to addressing wave energy management.

In recent years, the engineering of wake boats has produced wake with reportedly 15x the energy of wake created by other motorboats. The the water ballasts and Wake Enhancing Devices on these craft create high risk to other users such as swamping boats, excessive waves, capsizing and generally hazardous water conditions for kayakers, rowers, swimmers and others, which effectively limits non-motorized boaters to areas not used by wake boats.

A survey of property owners this summer, which included marinas, floating home communities, and river businesses has shown that the dollar damage to docks, decks, floats and homes reached record levels in the

past two years. It is clear that wake sports are central to the problem because in the two years of the Sellwood Bridge construction, the boats were not allowed on either side of the construction. There were no reports of wake damage or hazards for users.

This legislation makes a strong attempt to certify boats for specific sports, register and update records, create endorsement stickers for easier identification, and provide law enforcement tools for boater management. Many users on the lower Willamette report that wake boat operators and enthusiasts may not understand the impact of how they operate the boat or how it impacts residents of the river, businesses or other users, and they support more education for the sport.

HB 2352 could alleviate the dramatic wake impact on users, river banks and structures. It could reduce the tens of thousands of dollars property owners have spent in the past two years on dock, deck and marina repairs from repetitive artificially-induced waves. It could allow homeowners to use their decks safely. And it could make the river safer for rowers, kayakers, Dragon Boats and sailing.

Both HB 2351 and 2352 are needed to return the Willamette to a recreational resource that is safe and accessible to all users.

Thank you for your consideration of HB 2352.

Renee Morgan



Portland Rowing Club
Oregon Yacht Club
Macadam Bay Moorage
Waterfront Organization of Oregon (WOOO)
Human Access Project
Willamette Riverkeeper
Oaks Park Community Boathouse
Rose City Rowing Club
Station L Rowing Club
Lewis & Clark Rowing
Wasabi Paddling Club Dragon Boats & Outriggers
Willamette Sailing Club
Willamette Rowing Club
LO Community Rowing Club
Landing Boat Club
RiversWest Small Craft Center
Bridgeton Moorage
Oregon River Sustainability and Preservation Alliance (ORSPA)